

AN EXERCISE IN THE OBSCURE: HOW HISTORY IS CONSTRUCTED ON THE CANTERBURY ROLL

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in History, University of Canterbury

2021

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Abstract

The central aim of this thesis is to understand how history was constructed on the fifteenth-century genealogical roll, Canterbury MS1, which is held at the University of Canterbury. The Roll traverses biblical history/mythology, Graeco-Roman mythology, British mythology, and history more contemporary to the Roll. It is the earlier parts of the manuscript, however, which this thesis is more interested in. Extant medieval scholarship is yet to recognise the value in disseminating the biblical and early material on rolls and universal chronicles. The present study, however, shows that much can be learned by applying a focused approach to the obscure material, looking primarily on the Roll-maker's intentions in portraying certain events. This analysis looks at the Roll through three themes: empire, origins of people, and geography. In doing this, previously unknown insights into the Roll's construction will be gained, revealing new sources and idiosyncrasies in the representation of certain periods of history. This study reveals that the construction of history on the Roll, although eclectic and contradictory, demonstrates a distinct and intentional thought process from the Roll-maker. By undertaking this analysis, this thesis demonstrates that an exercise in the obscure is worth engaging in.

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Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to the people who have supported me throughout my time writing this thesis. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge my primary supervisor, Dr Chris Jones, for introducing me to the Canterbury Roll Project several years ago, and for supporting my academic growth throughout the time we have worked together. I am especially grateful for his assistance in reading the Latin sources used for this study. His constant thoughts and insights on this thesis gave me the motivation to expand my approach to the Roll and look at new areas. I would also like to extend my thanks to Dr Natasha Hodgson for taking the time to read my drafts and offer feedback.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the officemates I have had the pleasure of spending the past two years with. I am grateful for our longwinded debates and chats in the office which offered a welcome distraction from some of the deeper parts of my research. I would especially like to acknowledge my fellow medievalist, Lisa Rolston, for lending me sources and allowing me bounce half-formed ideas off her. Her help has been invaluable to the overall progression of my thesis.

Thank you to my parents who have never stopped encouraging me to pursue my interests. I owe a great deal of this thesis to you for the constant love and support which you have both given me. I would also like to give a special thanks to Kaila for being with me throughout this process. Thank you for putting up with my ramblings about the Roll and medieval primary sources. I am especially grateful for your assistance with proofreading and for accompanying me on a last-minute dash to Dunedin for an obscure primary source.

Finally, it would be remiss of me to not mention my old Canterbury Roll internship partners, Josh Kim and Paula Friend. Although Paula is no longer with us, her passion for the Roll and medieval history remains strong in my memory. It is not an exaggeration to say that this thesis would not be possible without the enthusiasm and interest in the Roll you both instilled in me early on.

Note on the edition of Canterbury MS 1

This thesis employs the 2017 digital edition/translation of the Canterbury Roll published by Canterbury University Press. This edition was a key outcome of the ongoing Canterbury Roll Project. This is the second edition/translation of the Canterbury Roll, the first being Arnold Wall's *Handbook to the Maude Roll*, which was published in 1919. Wall's edition, although it contains a valuable translation, includes many inaccuracies which were corrected in the 2017 edition.

Throughout this thesis CRC numbers and CRN numbers are referred to. This is the system of individually numbering every commentary and every roundel on the genealogy. CRC (Canterbury Roll Commentary) refers to a block of text on the Roll, e.g. CRC001; CRN (Canterbury Roundel Number) refers to a roundel, usually containing a person, on or branching off the genealogy, e.g. CRN001 (Noah). The 2017 edition is the first edition of a roll to employ this technique; the numbering for text differs from that used in Wall's edition which is incomplete and numbers only commentaries.

Introduction

History as a discipline arose as a scholarly field during the early nineteenth century, before continuously developing through numerous phases and a variety of techniques. However, the writing of history has been ongoing for thousands of years; during the medieval period, chronicles and annals became the dominant format for recording significant events.¹ In the later Middle Ages, a new format, the genealogical roll, emerged. The roll's purpose was generally to show the genealogy of a monarch, to convey prestige in connection with the ruling house, or to delegitimise any rival claimants to the throne. Canterbury MS 1 (the Canterbury Roll), held in the special collections at the University of Canterbury Library, is an example of this, beginning with Noah and ending with Edward IV (r. 1461-1470 and 1471-1483).² Throughout the thousands of years of history told on the Roll, the narrative ventures into various aspects of "history," including Graeco-Roman mythology, Anglo-Saxon mythology, biblical history, classical history, and events more contemporary to the manuscript's creation. The efforts made by the Roll-maker to incorporate all of these different facets of the past onto Canterbury MS 1 invites questions about how late medieval conceptions of history in England were formed. To answer these questions, the history represented on the Roll will be used as a case study to analyse what made up a medieval "historian's" view of their past and how they portrayed it.

Modern historians of chronicles and manuscripts have tended to focus on aspects such as political ideology and textual composition. These studies are immensely valuable and provide important insights into the medieval world and the writing of history during this period. Chronicles from the likes of Ranulph Higden, William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth have been the subject of immense analysis by modern historians, revealing key insights into the methods and techniques of these medieval English chroniclers.³ There are, however, obscure and, at first glance, less striking examples of medieval manuscripts which have not received significant attention. Genealogical rolls in general are an example of this. This is a reasonably novel focus of study which has, however, picked up momentum over the

¹ John Burrow, *A History of Histories: Epics, Chronicles, Romances and Inquiries from Herodotus and Thucydides to the Twentieth Century* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), pp. 229-232.

² Christchurch, University of Canterbury, MS 1. The present edition was published online in 2017.

³ For bibliographies of editions and studies on these chronicles, see: Jane Beal, "Higden, Ranulf", *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* vol. 1, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 784-785; Lisa M. Ruch, "William of Malmesbury", *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* vol. 2, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 1511-1512; Jane Beal & Edward Donald Kennedy, "Geoffrey of Monmouth", *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* vol. 1, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 681-684.

past two decades. On Canterbury MS 1 itself, extant research has tended to focus on events on the Roll more contemporary to the date of its construction (1429-1433), as is typical of medieval chronicles. My research, however, breaks away from this approach, looking at parts of the Roll which have not yet been examined due to their apparent lack of significance. This will reveal that much can be learned by studying the obscure. Examples of this obscurity which are examined throughout this thesis include the biblical material at the beginning of the manuscript; pagan elements throughout the Roll; the way the classical period is represented by the Roll-maker; and the role that geography plays on the Roll. Features of these topics, such as the sources employed by the Roll-maker, their role in the manuscript's overall narrative, and the reasons for their inclusion on the genealogy, reveal new insights into the construction of medieval genealogical rolls. This thesis can therefore be considered an exercise in the obscure; an exercise which I will show is worth engaging in.

The Canterbury Roll

Canterbury MS 1 is an almost five-metre long genealogical roll made up of six membranes of parchment joined together on a canvas backing.⁴ The central line begins with the biblical figure, Noah, and probably originally ended with the Lancastrian King Henry VI (r. 1422-1461 and 1470-1471) before being heavily edited by another scribe who added the Yorkist king, Edward IV. This makes Canterbury MS 1 part of the so-called "Noah group," a group of dozens of rolls from the early to mid-fifteenth century which show the genealogy of English kings from Noah.⁵ The central tree is a red line displayed down the centre of the manuscript, running through to the end of the British kings where the line initially stops (with Caretic – CRN287), before restarting with the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy. It then moves on to the pre-Conquest Anglo-Saxon period and lists the post-Conquest kings up to the Roll's contemporary history. From Edward III (r. 1327-1377 – CRN492) the colour of the line changes to half blue and half red to demonstrate the supposed English claim to the French crown. Scattered throughout the Roll are other genealogical lines of succession, including

⁴ For a basic description of Canterbury MS 1: Chris Jones, "The Canterbury Roll", *Treasures of the University of Canterbury*, ed. Chris Jones, Bronwyn Matthews, Jennifer Clement (Christchurch: Christchurch University Press, 2011), pp. 84-88.

⁵ The ongoing Canterbury Roll project has expanded our understanding of the number of rolls in the Noah group, particularly thanks to the work of Dr Natasha Hodgson at Nottingham Trent University. The Noah group was initially identified by Allan: Alison Allan, "Political Propaganda Employed by the House of York in England in the Mid-Fifteenth Century, 1450-1471", unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Wales (1981), pp. 262-263.

pre-Conquest Norman dukes, thirteenth-century French kings, two Welsh lines, and a line of ancient German kings.⁶ Each person listed on the genealogy is represented by a roundel, which displays the individual's name and, in some cases, the length of their reign in Arabic and Roman numerals, the latter an addition by a later scribe.⁷ The genealogical lines are accompanied by a commentary written in Latin, which details the succession of the displayed kings and the notable features of their reigns. This commentary is sourced from several popular chronicles and histories such as Geoffrey of Monmouth, Ranulph Higden, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, William of Newburgh, and Gerald of Wales.⁸

The Roll was constructed by four unnamed scribes between 1429 and 1485.⁹ The original scribe worked between 1429 and 1433 and is responsible for writing almost the entire Roll. He is characterised as the “Lancastrian scribe” due to his apparent sympathy for the House of Lancaster, the ruling house in England at the time. Though originally identified by Arnold Wall,¹⁰ it was Maree Shirota who determined the period in which the Lancastrian scribe was active. She found that by looking at how certain individuals were displayed with or without their titles, the Roll's original construction can be dated to 1429-1433.¹¹ It should be noted, however, that this scribe is not necessarily the same as the Roll-maker; it is likely that the scribe was simply copying off extant rolls. It is important to make this distinction because it is the decisions made by the Roll-maker which are examined in this thesis, not those of the scribe. The other major scribe is known as the “Yorkist scribe,” whose contribution can be seen towards the bottom of the Roll. The Yorkist hand was active during the early to mid-1460s, heavily editing the manuscript to emphasise the Yorkist claim to the throne. He worked to delegitimise the reigns of the previous Lancastrian kings, at a point in the English civil war, the “Wars of the Roses,” when Edward IV had ascended the throne. The other two scribes, the Margaret of Burgundy scribe and the Roman Numerals scribe, whose work was only discovered in the past decade, provided only minor alterations, but

⁶ A new edition/translation of the Roll was published in 2017: Chris Jones et al., ed., “The Canterbury Roll – A Digital Edition”, *The Canterbury Roll Project* (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2017). <http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll>.

⁷ Thandiwe Parker, “A Woman's Role”, *Comitatus* vol. 48, no. 1 (2017), p. 96.

⁸ The Roll's sources were identified originally by Arnold Wall in: Arnold Wall, “Introduction”, *Handbook to the Maude Roll: Being a XVth century MS Genealogy of the British and English Kings from Noah to Edward IV, with Marginal History*, ed. and trans. Arnold Wall (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1919).

⁹ Maree Shirota, “Yorkist Revision”, *The Canterbury Roll Project* (2017). <https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/origin/yorkist.shtml>.

¹⁰ Wall, *Maude Roll*.

¹¹ For Shirota's argument regarding the dating of the Roll: Shirota, “Unrolling History: fifteenth-century political culture and perceptions on the Canterbury Roll”, unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury (2015), pp. 10-11.

some significance can be seen in their work.¹² Although this study focuses on the part of the Roll written by the Lancastrian scribe, he wrote based off the Roll-maker's original plans. It is, therefore, the work of the Roll-maker, not the scribes, which gives the best insight into the construction of history on the Roll.

Historiography

Scholarship on medieval primary sources has seen great progress since the nineteenth century. Early on, sources such as chronicles and annals were thought of as unreliable due to their obvious shortcomings in accurately portraying the past. This idea originated with Leopold von Ranke's conviction that it was the job of the historian to accurately recount the past; therefore, any inaccurate source was deemed unhelpful to modern historians.¹³ Subsequent developments in the historical discipline have, however, led to a greater recognition of medieval chronicles as valuable in their own right. As a result, more attention is now paid to medieval works of history, as scholars have become increasingly involved in discovering, editing, and understanding medieval sources.¹⁴ The linguistic turn that the historical discipline experienced in the 1970s heralded this new approach, where medieval texts began to be examined not as official histories, but as texts which could tell historians about the inner workings of the medieval chronicler's mind.¹⁵ This literary approach was spearheaded by the French historian Bernard Guenée, who argued that much can be gained by examining the editorial and compilation processes of the medieval historian.¹⁶ Chris Given-Wilson's *Chronicles* is one of the foremost English studies on this subject for late medieval English texts. He argues that chronicles, despite their shortcomings as accurate accounts, can "tell us a great deal about how people conceived and understood their past in

¹² For discussion on the significance of the Roman Numeral Scribe see: Parker, "A Woman's Role", pp. 109-114. For the Margaret of Burgundy Scribe: Chris Jones, "Scribal Hands in the Digital Edition", *The Canterbury Roll Project* (2017). <https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/origin/yorkist.shtml>; Jones, "The Canterbury Roll", *Treasures*, p. 89.

¹³ Burrow, *A History of Histories*, pp. 462-464. For more on von Ranke's view of the historical discipline, see: Leopold von Ranke, *The Theory and Practice of History*, ed. Georg G. Iggers, trans. Wilma A. Iggers (London: Routledge, 2011 [republication]), pp. 12-15.

¹⁴ R.C. van Caenegem, *Guide to the Sources of Medieval History*, ed. Richard Vaughn (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company, 1978), p. 185.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 91. For a post-modernist approach to medieval genealogy, see: Gabrielle Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), pp. 100-110.

¹⁶ Bernard Guenée, *Historie et culture historique dans l'Occident medieval* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1980). See also: Bernard Guenée, "L'historien et la compilation au XIII^e siècle", *Journal des Savants* vol. 1, no. 1 (1985), pp. 119-135.

the later middle ages...”.¹⁷ Matthew Kempshall’s *Rhetoric and the Writing of History* is another example of the growing complexity now associated with the study of chronicles; his study analyses methodological principles employed by medieval historians.¹⁸ This thesis adopts this literary approach, and can be considered as following in the footsteps of these studies. It will examine the processes used by the Roll-maker to compile and edit Canterbury MS 1 to form the narrative displayed throughout the unexplored parts of the manuscript.

As a result of this renewed interest in medieval materials, greater scholarly attention has been given to genealogical rolls of this period.¹⁹ *The Scroll Considerans* (1999) is a published edition of an Adam roll from the reign of Henry VI, one of the few examples of a full transcription and translation of a roll.²⁰ *Broken Lines*, a collection of essays on different aspects of medieval genealogical literature, went a long way to highlighting the importance of these texts as materials worth studying.²¹ Olivier de Laborderie’s chapter within this volume is of particular interest for this thesis. It discusses English genealogical rolls in detail, summarizing their form and provenance, and looks at topics such as kingship and an English national identity on rolls.²² De Laborderie’s study, however, focuses primarily on rolls up to 1422, therefore excluding the Noah group. Margaret Lamont also gives a useful introduction to English genealogical rolls, using another manuscript, the “Rouse Roll,” as a case study for finding how medieval historians approached genealogies and their subsequent limitations.²³ Lamont, however, failed to acknowledge the Noah group as a distinct category; she instead identified categories of rolls starting with Adam, Brutus, and the Anglo-Saxon kings (usually

¹⁷ Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 2004), pp. XXII-XXIII (introduction).

¹⁸ Matthew Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History, 400-1500* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011). See also: Hans-Werner Goetz, “The ‘Methodology’ of Medieval Chronicles”, *Chronicon Medieval Narrative Sources: A Chronological Guide with Introductory Essays*, ed. János M. Bak and Ivan Jurković (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), pp. 25-33; Justin Lake, “Current Approaches to Medieval Historiography”, *History Compass* vol. 13, no. 3 (2015), pp. 89-109; Rolf Sprandel, “World Historiography in the Late Middle Ages”, trans. Kristin E. Thomas, *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis (London: Brill, 2003), pp. 157-180.

¹⁹ Shiota, “Unrolling History”, p. 7.

²⁰ *The Scroll Considerans (Magdalen MS 248) Giving the Descent from Adam to Henry VI*, ed. and trans. J. E. T. Brown (Oxford: 1999). This edition is similar to Wall’s handbook format from his 1919 edition of Canterbury MS 1.

²¹ *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Medieval England and France*, ed. Raluca L. Radulescu and Edward Donald Kennedy (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008).

²² Olivier de Laborderie, “A New Pattern for English History”, *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Medieval England and France*, ed. Raluca L. Radulescu and Edward Donald Kennedy (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 45-63. See also de Laborderie’s larger study: Olivier de Laborderie, *Historie, memoire et pouvoir. Les genealogies en Rouleau des rois d’Angleterre (1250-1422)* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013).

²³ Margaret Lamont, “‘Genealogical’ History and the English Roll”, *Medieval Manuscripts, Their Makers, and Users: A Special Issue of Viator in Honor of Richard and Mary Rouse*, ed. Henry Ansgar Kelly (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), pp. 245-261.

Egbert), ignoring those which begin with Noah. Other works, such as those of Judith Collard and Joan Holladay, have focused on specific issues within rolls; for instance, their representation of women.²⁴ One of the most important additions to recent scholarship on rolls is Sara Trevisan's article on a ninety foot long pedigree roll from the reign of Elizabeth I, where she explores its sources and political function.²⁵ Although Trevisan touches on some of the early material of the roll, she does not spend an extensive amount of time on it, meaning that there is still plenty of room to examine this. The most recent addition to roll historiography, *The Roll in England and France in the Late Middle Ages*, is a collection of essays exploring how genealogy was represented and its differing forms and functions.²⁶ There is, however, no extensive study on the Noah group, nor are the biblical or pagan materials on these rolls explored. Thus far, there has not been a thorough exploration of the early material of a roll from the Noah group. Furthermore, an examination of the construction of history on Canterbury MS 1 itself has not yet been undertaken. It is this gap in scholarship which this thesis will fill, offering a fresh approach to the study of not just Canterbury MS 1, but to the wider area of medieval genealogical rolls and the Noah group.

Scholarship on Canterbury MS 1 itself is limited but expanding. Since Arnold Wall, professor of English at Canterbury College, published the first edition/translation in 1919,²⁷ usage of the Roll has been sporadic at best. Wall gave a public lecture on it in 1920,²⁸ and in 1929 he delivered an address on Canterbury MS 1 to the Canterbury branch of the "New Zealand Historical Association."²⁹ However, no further serious scholarship involving the Roll appeared until 1979, when Alison Allan used it as a source.³⁰ Allan's study focused on Yorkist propaganda during the Wars of the Roses, using the Roll as an example of a Lancastrian genealogy which was edited to support the Yorkist claim. The same approach can

²⁴ Judith Collard, "Gender and Genealogy in English Illuminated Royal Genealogical Rolls from the Thirteenth Century", *Parergon* vol. 17 (2000), pp. 11–34; Joan Holladay, "Women in English Royal Genealogies of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries", *The Four Modes of Seeing: Approaches to Medieval Imagery in honor of Madeline Harrison Caviness*, ed. Evelyn Staudinger Lane et al. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 348–64.

²⁵ Sara Trevisan, "Genealogy and Royal Representation: Edmund Brudenell's Pedigree Roll for Elizabeth I (1558–60)", *Huntingdon Library Quarterly* vol. 81, no. 2 (2018), pp. 257–275.

²⁶ *The Roll in England and France in the Late Middle Ages: Form and Content*, ed. Stefan G. Holz, Jörg Peltzer, and Maree Shirota (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019).

²⁷ Wall, *Maude Roll*.

²⁸ "Current Notices", *Lyttleton Times*, 10 April 1920, p. 8; "Town and Country", *Star*, 12 April 1920, p. 7; "The Maude Roll: Lecture Given by Arnold Wall", *The Press*, 15 April 1920, p. 7.

²⁹ "Historical Association: Address by Arnold Wall", *The Press*, 14 June 1929, p. 6. Also mentioned in: "Historical Association: Annual Report", *The Press*, 27 February 1930, p. 8. I have not been able to locate the text of the lecture itself.

³⁰ Alison Allan, "Yorkist Propaganda: Pedigree, prophecy and the 'British history' in the Reign of Edward IV", *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England*, ed. Charles Ross (Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing Limited, 1979), pp. 172–173.

be found in her unpublished doctoral thesis.³¹ This use of the Roll was also employed by Ralph Griffiths, Allan's supervisor, who used it as an example to demonstrate how medieval rolls were used as political tools.³² Since Allan and Griffiths, most work on the Roll has focused squarely on the manuscript itself, rather than using it as a source in a wider analysis.

Following Allan and Griffiths's work, the Roll was not studied again until 2007. Since then, studies have been undertaken primarily, to date, by researchers based at the University of Canterbury and Nottingham Trent University. Interest in the Roll has been renewed mainly due to the publication of a digital edition, a project undertaken by Digital Humanities and History students and staff from the University of Canterbury, Nottingham Trent University, and the University of Heidelberg.³³ In 2007, Robert Rouse assessed the work of the Yorkist scribe specifically, as well as offering a discussion of Canterbury College's acquisition of the Roll and the cultural significance of this in contemporary New Zealand.³⁴ Chris Jones followed this in 2011, providing an introduction to the Roll and an analysis of its medieval origins.³⁵ More recently, the Roll has been used as the key primary source for analysing different aspects of the manuscript's contemporary environment. Shiota was the first to take this approach. She examined the Roll's representation of royal deposition and the perception of deposition in medieval England more generally.³⁶ Her MA thesis also followed this approach, looking at what the content of the Roll can tell us about contemporary political culture.³⁷ Shiota's thesis is the most extensive work on Canterbury MS 1 to date, providing much of what is currently known about the manuscript. Thandiwe Parker took a similar approach to Shiota, using the representation of women on the Roll as a way of understanding the societal expectations that existed for women in medieval England.³⁸ Parker analysed the way different scribes depicted women on the Roll, finding that women who did not conform to certain expectations were either framed in a negative light by scribes,

³¹ Allan, "Political Propaganda."

³² Ralph A. Griffiths, "The Sense of Dynasty in the Reign of Henry VI", *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England*, ed. Charles Ross (Gloucester: Allan Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1979), p. 23.

³³ For an introduction to the Roll Project: Chris Jones "Introduction", *The Canterbury Roll Project* (2017). <https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/Intro/index.shtml>.

³⁴ Robert Allen Rouse, "Inscribing Lineage: Writing and Rewriting the Maude Roll", *Migrations, Medieval Manuscripts in New Zealand*, ed. Stephanie Hollis and Alexandra Barratt (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), pp. 108–22. Rebecca Hayward also gives an analysis of Canterbury College's acquisition of the Roll: Rebecca Hayward, "Prestige and Pedagogy: Ownership of Medieval Manuscripts", *Migrations, Medieval Manuscripts in New Zealand*, ed. Stephanie Hollis and Alexandra Barratt (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), pp. 89–97.

³⁵ Jones, "The Canterbury Roll", pp. 84–85.

³⁶ Maree Shiota, "Royal Depositions and the 'Canterbury Roll'", *Parergon* vol. 32, no. 2 (2015), pp. 39–51.

³⁷ Shiota, "Unrolling History."

³⁸ Parker, "A Women's Role", pp. 95–115.

or simply not acknowledged at all. My thesis adopts a similar approach to that employed by Shirota and Parker, using the Roll as the main focus of my study, and the key primary source for studying aspects of its contemporary environment. In this case, my exploration will focus on the way history was written on genealogical rolls in fifteenth-century England.

This thesis engages with these diverse streams of historiography and adds to the growing corpus of work on rolls, and scholarship on Canterbury MS 1 itself. In many instances, the subjects covered throughout this thesis are underexplored or even *unexplored* in secondary literature. Because of this, more specific historiographical discussions will take place in the chapters to show what has been studied and where gaps exist. Partly as a result of a dearth of relevant secondary literature, a large primary source base will be employed, particularly, but not exclusive to, the sources which it is known the Roll-maker engaged with.³⁹

Approaches

The approaches taken towards the Roll in this thesis, though novel, are done so with an awareness of extant scholarship on some of the themes engaged with in the present study. The first of these themes concerns the way in which “origins of people” myths were developed and circulated in medieval England. This is the primary focus of chapters two and three, though each chapter will focus on a different part of the Roll. Work by Rhys Jones and Susan Reynolds on medieval *origines gentium* provide thorough analyses of the key characteristics of origin myths and how they were used in medieval society.⁴⁰ Discussions in these works will be applied to Canterbury MS 1 in order to understand the Roll as an “origins of people” document. Thus far no scholarly work has approached an English genealogical roll as an *origines gentium* document; this thesis, therefore, opens up new ground.

Another important theme of this thesis is the examination of the methodologies of historians of the Middle Ages. Hans-Werner Goetz provides a useful, succinct survey of the methodology of medieval chroniclers, arguing that chronicles were written according to a set of criteria which guided contemporary historians.⁴¹ These criteria include compilation and the

³⁹ For a general discussion of the sources used by the Roll-maker in making Canterbury MS 1, see: Shirota, “Unrolling History”, p. 10; Wall, *Maude Roll*.

⁴⁰ Susan Reynolds, “Medieval *Origines Gentium*”, *History* vol. 68 (1983), pp. 375-390; Rhys Jones, “Foundation legends, *origines gentium*, and senses of ethnic identity: legitimising ideologies in medieval Celtic Britain”, *Environment and Planning* vol. 17 (1999), pp. 691-703.

⁴¹ Goetz, “The ‘Methodology’”, pp. 25-33.

importance of authority rooted in history-writing traditions, meaning that chroniclers adhered to common guidelines. This idea is echoed by Matthew Kempshall, who uses the examples of William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon to demonstrate this point.⁴² Given-Wilson also argues that this is especially demonstrated by Geoffrey of Monmouth's attempt to justify his account by citing a very "old British book."⁴³ By following this criteria, the chronicler's own voice comes through in his chronicle, observed through his choice of sources and how he presented them.⁴⁴ It is important to understand this aspect of medieval chroniclers' methodology, as this process of selecting and compiling from extant chronicles is evident on the Roll. A focused compilation, such as that in chronicles and in our case, Canterbury MS 1, indicates the compiler possessed specific intentions and an awareness of his sources. Given-Wilson states: "The choices which they [late medieval chroniclers] made, and the reasons why they made them – insofar as they are deducible – can tell us as much about the purposes for which they wrote as can anything they actually said."⁴⁵ This idea will be applied to Canterbury MS 1, proving that the original Roll-maker took care to select which information to include on the Roll. By doing this, the present study fits into this branch of medieval historiography, showing that this process is evident on genealogical rolls as well as chronicles.

One of the key aims of this thesis is to explore the construction of history on Canterbury MS 1, and to show that the obscure and early parts of chronicles and genealogical rolls are worth engaging with. Rather than examining each element of the manuscript in chronological order, this study takes a thematic approach to the Roll, beginning with a discussion on how the Roll represents the Roman Empire and the concept of empire more generally. This will be a political analysis, an approach which is not necessarily novel in the study of genealogical rolls.⁴⁶ This analysis will involve looking at how this part of the Roll portrays contemporary political thought and concepts related to contemporary English attitudes towards empire. This first chapter is then used as a launch pad for the following three chapters, which use the Roll to explore two other themes: medieval origins of people myths, and geography. Employing this chapter structure establishes that it is possible to go

⁴² Kempshall, *Rhetoric*, pp. 290-294.

⁴³ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 14.

⁴⁴ Goetz, "The 'Methodology'", p. 31.

⁴⁵ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 16. For a specific example of how chroniclers used and appropriated the work of other writers: Lister M. Matheson, "The Chronicle Tradition", *A Companion to Arthurian Literature*, ed. Helen Fulton (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 74-86.

⁴⁶ See, Shirota, "Unrolling History"; Shirota, "Royal Depositions", pp. 39-61.

further than a political analysis of a genealogical roll, while offering two examples of further studies which can be done.

Chapter one will examine how Canterbury MS 1 represents Britain's classical history and her relationship with Rome. This chapter will show how the Roll-maker was selective with the information he took from his primary source, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*HRB*), to represent a semi-fraternal relationship between Britain and Rome. This is done by minimising or omitting conflict between the two entities on the Roll, as opposed to what is represented in the *HRB*. The Roll-maker took this approach for several reasons, including promoting British/English prestige, and reinforcing continuity in the British crown, something to which the roll format lends itself. This in turn will lead to a discussion of how medieval authors appropriated classical history for their own purposes. Contemporary England's relationship with the Empire will also be explored, suggesting that England wanted to maintain a peaceful coexistence with the Empire, explaining why conflict with the classical Empire is minimised on the Roll. This study will build on extant research on how the appropriation of classical history was commonly undertaken in the Middle Ages, with particular reference to how this was also done in contemporary Welsh texts. This chapter introduces a medieval English perspective on classical Rome. This is a perspective which has not been explored, as previous scholarship has typically discussed how Antiquity was viewed during the Renaissance.

The second chapter is the first of two which will examine the Roll as an origins of people document. The focus of this chapter is based around the earliest part of the Roll. It will explore how Noah and his sons are represented as the progenitors of the British kings, introducing a study of the role of biblical exegeses in medieval origin myths. This will include a discussion of Noah's importance in contemporary England and will offer the first explanation for why Canterbury MS 1 begins with Noah, rather than Adam or any other popular progenitors. This chapter will also use the example of Noah's apocryphal fourth son, Scaef, to show how the roles of exegetical progenitors evolved in medieval history. In this instance, it is possible to see how Scaef's role changed by comparing his placement on Canterbury MS 1 with his role in earlier English chronicles and exegeses. This chapter will ultimately reveal that the representation of biblical history in the late Middle Ages was influenced by texts other than the standard Vulgate Bible. Popular chronicles and post-biblical studies were primarily used for biblical knowledge, showing that the Vulgate was not necessarily the universal authority on biblical history in England during the Middle Ages. It

further the argument that there is value in examining the obscure, showing that much can be revealed about the construction and development of history in medieval England by looking at the more ambiguous aspects of the Roll.

Chapter three will engage with similar themes to the previous chapter, but instead considers the pagan material on the Roll. The focus of this chapter is almost exclusively centred on the genealogical material located before Brutus (CRN115) on the central tree. It examines some of the more confusing individuals from the genealogy such as the Roman gods Saturn and Jupiter. Like chapter two, it will highlight the importance of continuity on the roll format. This chapter will argue that the pagan material acts as a bridge between the biblical content (discussed in chapter two) and Britain's Brutus origin myth. It will also show how pagan gods, such as the ones mentioned above, appear as men rather than as gods, exhibiting how the Roll uses the contemporary technique of euhemerism as a way of getting around displaying overtly pagan figures. Ultimately, this discussion will demonstrate how Canterbury MS 1 is definitively a product of the Middle Ages and does not display any Renaissance trends which were emerging from Italy at this time. The significance of the biblical and Trojan origin myths on the Roll will therefore be highlighted, as the Roll-maker appropriated Graeco-Roman mythology to create a "pagan bridge" between the two myths. Once again, this chapter focuses on an unexplored area on the Roll and shows that a focused study on the obscure material is worth engaging in.

The final chapter considers instances where geography is discussed on the Roll. This will involve identifying and isolating the commentaries on Canterbury MS 1 which discuss the physical layout of the world or give an indication of the Roll-maker's idea of space. Chapter four engages with scholarly debates on how medieval intellectuals understood the concept of geography and whether such a concept even existed in the Middle Ages. I will suggest that by looking at the Roll-maker's description of the world, we can see that the geographical knowledge conveyed throughout the Roll largely corresponds with what was commonly thought in fifteenth-century England. A more general discussion regarding how history and geography interact will also be undertaken to show that as an origins of people document, Canterbury MS 1 is fundamentally geographic by nature. Furthermore, by introducing a case-study on a specific commentary: CRC066, a new previously unconsidered source will be revealed, showing that the Roll-maker had access to a much larger corpus than has been assumed. This chapter contributes to scholarly debates on the medieval conception of geography, and the interaction between geography and the writing of history more

generally. An in-depth analysis of the role of geography on a medieval genealogical roll has not yet been carried out in scholarship, making this chapter the first such study.

Material in the upper half of Canterbury MS 1 above the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy is the primary focus of this thesis. An evaluation of this material will reveal some previously unknown sources for the Roll. Chronicles which the Roll-maker is known to have used will be employed for this study, including Geoffrey of Monmouth,⁴⁷ William of Malmesbury,⁴⁸ Henry of Huntingdon,⁴⁹ and Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*,⁵⁰ along with Nennius's *Historia Brittonum*, which was originally identified by Wall as a source but was subsequently removed from the canon in more recent studies.⁵¹ Other popular contemporary texts, such as the Vulgate Bible and the *Historia Scholastica*, will also be employed. The history written on the Roll, both in the commentaries and the genealogy, will then be compared with that in the chronicles to find any similarities between the two. Passages in the chronicles will also be compared with each other in order to get a picture of how each source represents different events; this will require using classical sources such as the works of Livy and Julius Caesar. Expanding the scope of primary sources will allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the Roll-maker's possible sources. Undertaking this study will provide an extensive examination of the Roll-maker's approach to compilation as a way of understanding his perceptions of history, while also demonstrating the value in the obscure on genealogical rolls.

Existing approaches to genealogical rolls have tended to focus more on the physical layout of the roll format, or a political analysis of the content on rolls. Handbook editions and translations of rolls were published prior to this, embodied by not just Wall's edition,⁵² but also J. E. T. Brown's edition of "The Scroll *Considerans*" (Magdalen MS 248).⁵³ Wall and Brown both gave a summary of the genealogies and the likely sources the Roll-maker used, as well as a transcription and translation of their respective rolls' commentary. More recent studies, however, have tended to employ a praxeological approach, as well as examining how

⁴⁷ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. and trans. Michael A. Faletra (Toronto: Broadview Editions, 2008).

⁴⁸ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Mynors, completed by R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998-1999).

⁴⁹ Henry Archdeacon of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum: The History of the English people*, ed. and trans. Diana Greenway (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁵⁰ Ranulph Higden, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden monachi Cestrensis: together with the English translations of John Trevisa and of an unknown writer of the fifteenth century* vol 1-9, ed. and trans. Joseph Rawley (London: Longman, 1865).

⁵¹ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, ed. and trans. John Morris (London: Phillimore & co, 1980).

⁵² Wall, *Maude Roll*.

⁵³ *The Scroll Considerans*, trans. Brown.

rolls developed in England or France, and a thematic look at aspects such as prophecy or the representation of women.⁵⁴ The approaches taken in these studies are all immensely valuable, yet they have never been applied to the early parts of a roll, parts which are analysed in this thesis. This study should therefore be seen as building upon existing approaches to genealogical rolls, while also breaking new ground by exploring under-analysed parts of a roll.

There are several caveats to be aware of when undertaking research of this nature. As a key source of the Roll, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB* will be heavily used throughout this thesis. It is therefore worth mentioning the importance of this source and why its contents should not be treated as actual history. The *HRB* is a pseudo-history of the kings of Britain released in 1139, detailing events from the kingdom of the Britons' founding under Brutus to its demise under Cadwallader. The narrative details Britain's history from its foundation, through the Roman invasions and occupation, followed by the Saxon invasions and the Arthurian legends. Geoffrey himself claimed that he largely based his account on a "very old book in the British tongue" given to him by Walter Archdeacon of Oxford.⁵⁵ Contemporary reaction to the *HRB* was varied, yet the book became a "best-seller" in England, gaining fans such as Henry of Huntingdon.⁵⁶ The narrative in the *HRB* became generally accepted history until the sixteenth century, influencing many different facets of society, especially other literary works.⁵⁷ Not all of Geoffrey's contemporaries bought into his fantastical narrative, however; the chronicler, Ailred of Rievaulx, branded Geoffrey's history as "fables and lies", and William of Newburgh issued a scathing attack on him in the prologue to his *Historia rerum Anglicarum*.⁵⁸ Modern historians agree that Geoffrey's history is largely fanciful and fails to offer any actual facts.⁵⁹ Despite this, Canterbury MS 1 repeatedly employs the *HRB*, particularly in the material that I will explore in chapter one.

⁵⁴ For a survey: De Laborderie, "A New Pattern", pp. 45-62; Collard, "Gender and Genealogy", pp. 11-34; Shirota, "Unrolling History"; Jörg Peltzer, "The Roll in England and France in the Late Middle Ages: Introductory Remarks", *The Roll in England and France in the Late Middle Ages: Form and Content*, ed. Stefan G. Holz, Jörg Peltzer, and Maree Shirota (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), pp. 1-20; Parker, "A Woman's Role", pp. 95-115.

⁵⁵ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings*, p. 41.

⁵⁶ Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550-c.1307* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1974), p. 187, 200.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

⁵⁸ William of Newburgh's attack is described in: Anne Lawrence-Mathers, "William of Newburgh and the Northumbrian construction of English history", *Journal of Medieval History* vol. 33 (2007), pp. 345-346.

⁵⁹ For a modern comment on Geoffrey's historicity, see: Guy Halsall, *Worlds of Arthur: Facts & Fictions of the Dark Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 141-142.

When dealing with medieval materials, there are limitations which are present and unavoidable. Using primary sources such as chronicles bring with them certain challenges, particularly when attempting to establish the source base of a medieval compiler, in this case, the Roll-maker. Firstly, there is a problem of availability. Despite the scores of medieval English chronicles which have survived to today, there is an innumerable amount which have been lost.⁶⁰ It is certainly possible that this is the case for the Roll-maker's sources, especially for the early material. Therefore, the Roll-maker's exact sources may never be known. There is also the question of which manuscripts the Roll-maker had access to; surviving manuscripts of key primary sources may be different to that used in constructing Canterbury MS 1. It can be difficult, therefore, to determine with certainty that he did or did not use a certain source, as the manuscript he possessed may have contained details absent from surviving copies. There is also the fundamental issue that the Roll-maker's reasoning for some of the decisions he made cannot be explicitly known. However, this thesis will show that it is possible to discern certain aspects of his intentions. Acknowledging these potential limitations will allow for a more thoughtful and considered approach to studying the writing of history on Canterbury MS 1.

One of the key aspects of my methodology has been distinguishing and defining different segments of the Roll. This will allow for a clear focus on the material examined in each chapter. This segmenting is particularly evident in chapters one, two, and three, which each focus on a different part of the Roll. Chapter one, for example, looks at its representation of classical history. The extent of the genealogy and commentary which is analysed is, therefore, limited to the part of the Roll which talks specifically about the classical period. The CRC and CRN numbers are used to lay out the borders for each segment, making clear which names and commentaries fall into each category. These divisions are my own creation designed for the purposes of this study and are therefore not considered by the Roll-maker, who constructed the Roll to be read as a continuous work of history.

The historiographical analysis offered in the present study signifies a new approach to genealogical rolls and to Canterbury MS 1 in particular (and the Noah group more broadly). The four chapters of this thesis each identify and explore new avenues of research in the area of genealogical rolls, offering fresh perspectives on how history is constructed on them. It

⁶⁰ This is discussed in: Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, pp. XX-XXIII.

will be shown that the Roll-maker possessed a strong awareness of his sources, and that he knowingly used and manipulated them to construct the narrative he wanted to portray. This overall study will demonstrate the value of a focused approach on specific segments of the Roll, building on the growing corpus of extant research on Canterbury MS 1.

Chapter One

Emperors as Kings and Anglo-Imperial notions: Classical History on the Roll

Introduction

Canterbury MS 1 contains a fabulous blend of history and mythology. This amalgamation can be observed most overtly towards the end of the line of British kings, which presents the narrative of Britain's many interactions with Rome. What makes this part of the Roll worth studying is the alternative history which is shown and the way the Roll-maker chooses to represent it. This narrative is sourced from the twelfth-century British fantasist/historian, Geoffrey of Monmouth, rather than original Roman or British sources which discuss this period. Geoffrey's appropriation of classical history plays an important role on Canterbury MS 1, outlining the period where Britain came under Roman subjugation. Observing how the Roll-maker utilised the *HRB* for the classical material on the Roll provides an insight into how contemporary English historians viewed their past, as well as showing which sources they believed to be the most reliable for this period. Researching this brings further understanding to how fifteenth-century English historians conceived their own past. "Classical history," and the term "classical" more generally, will be used throughout the chapter. When this is done, the period encompassing the Roman Republic and Empire is referred to. "Classical," in this chapter, alludes to classical history rather than mythology, which is explored in chapter three.

With these definitions in mind, this first chapter will explore themes of empire by looking at how the classical Roman Empire is represented on Canterbury MS 1. Firstly, an outline of the material on the Roll which is examined in this chapter will be given, followed by a general description of how Britain's classical history is told throughout the manuscript. The importance of the classical material as a vehicle for maintaining continuity on the genealogy will then be discussed. This analysis will find that the Roll-maker's employment of an unbroken central line for this otherwise disjointed and chaotic period is key in establishing a sense of stability. The contemporary relationship between Britain and the Holy Roman Empire will then be evaluated to find why a semi-fraternal relationship between the former and the classical Roman Empire is represented. This survey will find that representing positive relations between England and the Empire was beneficial for England's ongoing war with France. This chapter discusses these points, as well as giving a wider evaluation of the classical material on the Roll to supply an image of how fifteenth-century English scholars viewed their classical past. It will discuss how the Roll-maker and Geoffrey of Monmouth

appropriated history to serve the narrative they wanted to portray, and offer a brief evaluation of how Welsh writers also appropriated history. Finally, the overall function of the classical material will be discussed, establishing that it serves to bring prestige to the lineage of British kings, as well as showing Britain to be militarily on a par with the Roman Empire.

Surprisingly, a specific study of how classical history was viewed in medieval England has, as far as I am aware, never been undertaken. Indeed, no such study has been carried out in relation to any genealogical roll.

The classical material on the genealogy begins with the British king, Cassibelaunus (CRN255), who was supposedly king when the Romans invaded Britain under Julius Caesar. The deeds of the kings directly prior to Cassibelaunus are not recorded in the commentary of the Roll (see CRC042), making his interactions with Caesar, and indeed the initial Roman invasions, a logical starting point for the classical material. The corresponding commentary, which describes how Cassibelaunus was forced to pay tribute to Rome after being defeated by Caesar (CRC046), is the first commentary to mention an historical Roman figure. From here, the Roll lists several important classical individuals, including the Emperor Claudius (CRC050), Emperor Bassianus/Caracalla (CRN264), Allectus (CRC267), and Constantine the Great (CRN272). Constantine III (CRN275), that is, the historical Emperor Constantine III (r. 409-411), is the end point for the classical material on Canterbury MS 1. From here the narrative delves back into the legendary, presenting Arthurian mythology from Geoffrey of Monmouth. This chapter will be limited to discussing the classical material on the Roll, delving into the pseudo-historical narrative of Rome's exploits surrounding Britain and its kings.

The approach taken in this chapter is novel in medieval historiography, as the representation of Antiquity in fifteenth-century England has not yet been explored. Scholarship does, however, recognise the value of looking at the revival of the classical in fifteenth-century Italy.⁶¹ Scholars of this period have paid significant attention to this, yet there is also an interesting case study to be undertaken on classical reception elsewhere in Europe at the same time, in this case, fifteenth-century England. This study finds that England and Italy of this period are both interested in the classical, yet the interpretational

⁶¹ Originally discussed by Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of Renaissance Italy*, trans. S.C.G. Middelmore (Kitchener, Ontario: Batocho Books, 2001 [original publication: 1860]), pp. 147-155. See also: Carol Everhert Quillen, "Humanism and the lure of antiquity", *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance: 1300-1550*, ed. John M. Najemy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 37-58; Gene Brucker, *Living on the Edge in Leonardo's Florence* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 10-14.

framework is different; the English approach is more medieval. The other area which existing scholarship recognises is the influence of literature from Antiquity on medieval historiography. Cam Grey's essay in *The Oxford history of classical reception in English literature* explores this topic in-depth, showing how English historians in the Middle Ages adopted historiographical techniques from their classical predecessors.⁶² This approach once again dances around the topic of the reception of classical *history* in medieval England. It does, however, provide insight into the popularity of sources from Antiquity and how medieval English historians used and appropriated these texts. This provides useful insight into how contemporaries viewed aspects of the classical in general. The present study, however, is more interested in how the Canterbury Roll represents classical history and how this period is portrayed in fifteenth-century England more generally. I have not been able to find any specific study on how English historians from the fifteenth century understood classical Roman history, indicating that this is the first analysis to ask these questions.

Britishness and Continuity

The way in which some figures are represented on the Roll, and the depth to which they are discussed, suggests the Roll-maker followed a distinct thought process when selecting which information to portray in the commentary from his primary sources. The continuity of the British kingdom and crown portrayed by the *HRB* would have made it an attractive source to the Roll-maker. Although he makes no overt reference to Geoffrey's work, unlike the *Polychronicon*, which he referenced directly in a later commentary (CRC121), we can match the narrative told on the Roll to that in the *HRB*, which details how Britain was conquered by Julius Caesar, and the events that followed over the next several centuries. Other details such as the absence of characters on the Roll such as Cassibelaunus's "chief officer," Dolobellus, who appears in Nennius's *Historia Brittonum* and Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, would further support the case that Geoffrey is the Roll-maker's direct source.⁶³ This part appears to be completely sourced from Geoffrey's "The Coming of the Romans" chapter, as well as the beginning of the following chapter, "The House of Constantine," which contains most of the Arthurian narrative.⁶⁴ A discussion of

⁶² Cam Grey, "Historiography and Biography from the Period of Gildas to Gerald of Wales", *The Oxford history of classical reception in English Literature* vol. 1, ed. David Hopkins and Charles Martindale (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 323-350.

⁶³ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 23; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, p. 33.

⁶⁴ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 88-130.

how the Roll utilises the *HRB* will be undertaken, asking why the Roll-maker adopted the Galfridian account rather than any of his other sources. This is followed by a discussion of the elements the Roll-maker took from Geoffrey, in order to get a sense of the information he was trying to highlight in his representation of these classical/pseudo-historical events. This section will demonstrate that Britishness and continuity were key factors that led to the *HRB*'s employment for the classical on the Roll.

The first factor which led to the Roll-maker's decision to employ the *HRB* concerned Britishness; that is, the almost exclusive portrayal of history either of Britain, or from a British perspective in the text. This is particularly overt in this segment of the manuscript, which represents the highlights of the period of Roman dominance in Europe with strict reference to Britain. This is one of the key reasons why Geoffrey's *HRB* was a prime source for the Roll-maker, as it is presented history solely from the perspective of Britain. This fits the narrative that is represented throughout the Roll, that of a history of Britain/England and British/English kings. This is not to say that events from other regions are not discussed; however, when international events are mentioned, the Roll-maker does so in reference to British happenings, with the exception of the pre-Brutus mythology at the beginning of the Roll.⁶⁵ An example of this is CRC049 which states: "In the days of King Cymbeline, Christ was born in the fifth year of his reign, and the 5196th year from the beginning of the world." Although, here, the Roll-maker is reporting one of the most significant events in Christendom, he does so with specific reference to the British king, Cymbeline.⁶⁶ Geoffrey of Monmouth's intention to present the history of Britain is established in the preface/dedication of his *HRB*, where he states that he aims to provide a history of the kings of Britain from before Christ, something he claimed had not been done before.⁶⁷ The scope of this history suggests that it was Geoffrey's goal to present a wide chronological account of strictly British affairs, beginning with the settlement of the Britons on the island of Britain, and culminating with their decline and eventual fall under the final king, Cadwallader. The subject matter and its extensive nature would have made the *HRB* an attractive source for the Roll-maker to use, especially if it were his intention to provide an exclusively British (and later English) account of history. It is also worth mentioning that a distinct "English" national feeling had developed throughout the Middle Ages by the time of the Roll's construction. This "Englishness" was visible to the English people themselves and non-English people throughout Europe; evident,

⁶⁵ Chapters two and three provide comprehensive detail about the pre-Brutus material on Canterbury MS 1.

⁶⁶ Examples of similar commentaries are: CRC016, CRC017, CRC019, CRC028, CRC050.

⁶⁷ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, p. 41.

for example, through the role of birthplace in contemporary English law.⁶⁸ Furthermore, England was at war with France at the time of Canterbury MS 1's construction, meaning that the Roll-maker would have been hesitant to include any extensive continental history on his genealogy of English kings. The exception to this is when the Roll attempts to claim rulership over a foreign kingdom as it does with the French.⁶⁹ It is these factors that made the *HRB* an appealing source for the Roll-maker.

It could be argued, however, that other primary sources also present an account of primarily British/English history. This is true, but the *HRB* offers a pattern of continuity which is unmatched in other English chronicles. To understand the scale of the rewriting of history in the *HRB*, the actual political state of Britain prior to Roman occupation needs to be understood. The first key point is that no centralised British monarchy existed, and certainly nothing similar to the British monarchy represented on the Roll. Britain was instead inhabited by individual tribes each led by their own king or chieftain. One such chieftain, Cassibelaunus, is shown on Canterbury MS 1 as the king of all of Britain, despite the title not existing at the time. We also know that there was conflict between these tribes; Julius Caesar's own commentary on the British expedition notes that the king of the Trinovantes had been assassinated by Cassibelaunus prior to the Roman invasion.⁷⁰ Furthermore, there is evidence of separate cultures and ways of life throughout Britain and the various Belgic and Gallic tribes who inhabited it.⁷¹ This divided Britain, which existed prior to Roman occupation, bears little resemblance to the strong centralised monarchy capable of conquering Gaul and sacking Rome described by Geoffrey. However, to a medieval British genealogist, the *HRB* promoted British prestige and upheld the continuity which was endemic to the genealogical roll format.

The *HRB* presents a history of British affairs from the kingdom's founding under Brutus, to its eventual fall under Cadwallader, naming every single king in between. Although its legitimacy was questioned early on, the continuity in the Galfridian account would have been appealing to a genealogist wanting to show the history of all of Britain, as

⁶⁸ Andrea Ruddick, *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 100-131; V. H. Galbraith, "Nationality and Language in Medieval England", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* vol. 23 (1941), pp. 113-128.

⁶⁹ See: Maree Shirota, "The French Connection", *The Canterbury Roll* (2017).
<https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/Prop/france.shtml>.

⁷⁰ Julius Caesar, *Caesar's War Commentaries: De Bello Gallico and De Bello Civili*, ed. and trans. John Warrington (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1953), p. 79.

⁷¹ Peter Salway, *Roman Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 60-61.

our Roll-maker has attempted to do.⁷² The *HRB*'s strict commitment to British history shows why Geoffrey's account would have been attractive compared to other primary sources for the Roll. Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, for example, begins with a physical description of the island of Britain (as does the *HRB*, albeit rather more briefly) before beginning its historical account with Caesar's invasion of Britain and Cassibelaunus's resistance. He only briefly mentions Brutus and his ancestors prior to this, before listing the various peoples who inhabit the British Isles.⁷³ Henry's account completely misses out the hundreds of years of British "history" which Geoffrey details in the *HRB*. Higden's *Polychronicon* similarly does not meet this continuity criteria as it devotes significant attention to matters outside of England. This is evident in Higden's recounting of Caesar's invasion of Britain, which, rather than discussing the fallout of Caesar's conquest as Geoffrey does, he summarises the rest of Caesar's career in Rome, followed by an account of the Roman Empire's early history under the Julio-Claudian emperors.⁷⁴ The affairs of Britain during this period are mentioned only in passing.⁷⁵ Although British affairs are mentioned in the *Polychronicon*, they are overshadowed and diluted by details of other contemporary events. Compared to the *Polychronicon*, the *HRB* is a cohesive and continuous account of British history, rarely veering off onto continental affairs. This indicates why Geoffrey of Monmouth was seen as the most desirable source for this part of the Roll, rather than other popular contemporary primary sources.

Continuity is pivotal to the genealogical roll format. Shirota identified this with specific reference to Canterbury MS 1. She argued that the importance of continuity can be seen in the representation (or lack thereof) of Richard II's deposition; the Roll-maker intentionally avoided acknowledging the circumstances in which the Lancastrians came to power, instead representing continuity where there would otherwise be a break.⁷⁶ More broadly, however, one of the key functions of genealogical rolls is to present a consistent unbroken line of kings. Chapter three of this thesis will further discuss this idea regarding the pagan pre-Brutus material, showing that there was an effort made by the Roll-maker to maintain a continuous line between the biblical and the legendary British material on the

⁷² For the contemporary reception and influence of the *HRB*, see: Julia C. Crick, *The 'Historia Regum Britannie' of Geoffrey of Monmouth: IV. Dissemination and Reception in the later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewers, 1991), pp. 218-226; Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 550-1307*, pp. 200-202.

⁷³ Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, pp. 11-31.

⁷⁴ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol 4, pp. 172-392.

⁷⁵ Examples of this can be seen in: *Ibid.*, p. 223, 249, 363.

⁷⁶ Shirota, "Royal Depositions", pp. 39-61; Shirota, "Unrolling History", pp. 30-31.

genealogy. Examples can also be seen on the unbroken line between King Harold and William the Conqueror, and Edmund Ironside and Cnut. These examples show that continuity was a significant idea for the Roll-maker. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *HRB* was a source which provided this continuity, listing an extensive chronological history of Britain from its foundation. This section has argued why the Roll-maker chose the *HRB* as the source for the classical material. For what is a chaotic and disjointed period of British history, the *HRB* offers a smooth continuous account of events. This, coupled with its focus on strictly British affairs, made the *HRB* an ideal source for this period, providing an account which supported the narrative the Roll-maker wanted to portray.

Britain and the Romans on Canterbury MS 1

Britain's interactions with Rome can be found towards the bottom of the British central line of succession, prior to the Roll's transition to the Heptarchy and Anglo-Saxon rulers on a separate line. Although appearing smooth and continuous on the Roll, the events told in its primary source, the *HRB*, are anything but; many individuals displayed throughout this part of the genealogy came to power through rebellion or assassination. The Roll-maker, here, attempted to portray this period as stable, indicating that after the initial conquest, Britain and Rome enjoyed a symbiotic relationship. This section will evaluate this material, beginning by looking at how the Roll represents Julius Caesar's invasion of Britain. This will show that the Roll-maker once again edited Geoffrey's scathing representation of Caesar to make him seem less cowardly and his invasions less violent. From here, it will be shown how Claudius's invasion is depicted, before demonstrating how the Roll minimises the chaos and devastation caused by Severus in Geoffrey of Monmouth's account. This section will find that the period of British history portrayed on this portion of the Roll is misrepresented by the Roll-maker, portraying a more peaceful relationship between Britain and Rome compared to both the *HRB* and the true historical account.

The Roll-maker's goal in representing Britain's classical history was to minimise conflict between the Romans and the Britons, making his account seem smoother and more peaceful. This is a theme which is observed throughout the classical material. The Roll's representation of classical history begins with a description of Julius Caesar's victory over Cassibelaunus, making Britain a tributary to Rome for the first time (CRC046). Geoffrey

presented a detailed account of these events, devoting significant time to this narrative.⁷⁷ The first invasion occurred when Caesar found out that the Britons were descended from the same stock as the Romans, the Trojans. Geoffrey's account of the first invasion describes a fast, intense conflict in which Cassibelaunus was victorious, yet not without loss; his brother, Nennius, suffered a fatal blow from Caesar himself.⁷⁸ The second invasion was no more successful for the Romans, once again soundly defeated by the army of Cassibelaunus, after Caesar's ships struck strategically placed underwater stakes in the Thames, drowning much of Caesar's army and leaving the rest easy pickings for the Britons. It was on the third invasion that Caesar was most successful. After the betrayal of the duke of the British Trinovantes tribe, Androgeus, Caesar, with the help of his new British ally, was able to defeat Cassibelaunus, laying siege to the hilltop where the British king eventually surrendered, making Britain a tributary of Rome.⁷⁹ This account is very loosely based on historical events. We know that Caesar invaded Britain on two, not three, occasions in 56 and 54 BC, and that the British warlord, Cassibelaunus, the probable king of the Catuvellauni tribe (north of the Thames), led a united force of British tribes against the Romans.⁸⁰ Caesar was also assisted by a Trinovantian prince, Mandubracius, after Cassibelaunus killed the king of the Trinovantes in an earlier conflict.⁸¹ Because of this, the Trinovantes and several other British tribes surrendered to the Romans, assisting Caesar in locating the hiding Cassibelaunus. There are similarities between the Galfridian account and the historical account, but there are also overwhelming differences, significantly the addition of a third invasion.⁸² Despite Geoffrey devoting a vast amount of space to this episode, the Roll-maker presented an account consisting of only three lines, giving only the key details. The Roll-maker, once again, edited the *HRB* to reduce hostilities between Britain and Rome.

It is striking that, although Caesar is the invader in this situation, there is nothing negative said about him on the Roll, nor is this invasion even represented as one. Instead, the commentary (CRC046) says that Cassibelaunus was made the first tributary to Julius Caesar and that Cassibelaunus had conquered Julius twice previously. This is unusual considering

⁷⁷ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 84-92.

⁷⁸ Nennius's death is noted on Canterbury MS 1 in CRC048.

⁷⁹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 84-92.

⁸⁰ Sheppard Frere, *Britannia: A History of Roman Britain* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul Inc., 1967), pp. 16-26.

⁸¹ Mandubracius, renamed as "Androgeus" in later chronicles, is likely a textual error which remained prevalent. See: Frederick Stanley Dunn, "Julius Caesar in the English Chronicles", *The Classical Journal* vol. 14, no. 5 (1919), p. 286.

⁸² The *Polychronicon* more accurately reports only two invasions: Higden, *Polychronicon* vol 4, pp. 183-187.

Caesar was a foreign invader. Furthermore, the Roll-maker felt it necessary to specifically mention that Nennius (CRN254), the brother of Cassibelaunus, was killed by Julius Caesar himself. This is the only detail mentioned from Geoffrey's three battles between the Britons and the Romans; nothing else was apparently worth mentioning. In the *HRB*, Caesar is portrayed as a cowardly and inept general who could not subdue Britain without the treachery of the Briton, Androgeus, a man who Caesar was also afraid of, according to Geoffrey.⁸³ Compared to its primary source, Canterbury MS 1's Julius Caesar was a prestigious general who conquered the Britons and killed the King's brother. The Roll-maker selectively edited Geoffrey's account to make Caesar appear more capable in his conquest of Britain. In doing this, he not only strengthened the status of the Britons who defeated him, but also protected the Romans from a "villain" or "invader" status, something which he did throughout Britain's interactions with Rome. This portrayed somewhat of a symbiotic relationship between the two entities.⁸⁴

Following Caesar's initial invasions of Britain, according to the Roll, British kings continued to rule the island; the Roll, indeed, portrays a peaceful period in which Cassibelaunus was succeeded by his son, Tenvantius, followed by his son, Cymbeline. This continuation of British domination after Caesar's successful invasion accurately reflects historical events. The Roman historian, Tacitus, stated that Caesar had simply revealed Britain to Rome, rather than bringing the island under his dominion.⁸⁵ It was not until the Emperor Claudius (r. 41-54 AD) that Britain was to have another serious conflict with the Romans. This is represented on the Roll as being sparked when the king of Britain, Guiderius, refused to pay the yearly tribute to Rome. As a result, he was killed by Claudius after the Romans invaded. His brother, Arviragus, succeeded him mid-battle and struck a peace with the Romans after marrying Claudius's daughter, Genvissa. In actuality, the Romans' return to Britain had been planned under the previous emperor, Gaius (Caligula), before he abruptly ended his campaign under farcical circumstances.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the commentary for this event (CRC050) goes into much greater detail than it does for Caesar's initial British campaign. The reason for this is revealed upon looking closer at the text. The modern English translation of the commentary consists of six lines, the first three of which

⁸³ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 84-92.

⁸⁴ For another instance of the Roll-maker selectively editing the *HRB*, see: Shirota, "Unrolling History", p. 55.

⁸⁵ Frere, *Britannia*, p. 27.

⁸⁶ For Caligula's planned invasion, see: Aloys Winterling, *Caligula: A Biography*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider, Glenn W. Most, Paul Psounis (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011), p. 71.

summarise the conflict itself. The second half is devoted to outlining the legacy of the peace between the British and Romans, detailing how Claudiochester (Gloucester) was named by Claudius after the celebrations of Arviragus and Genvissa's wedding. The *HRB* devotes considerable space to describing this conflict, yet the Roll-maker chose instead to report more on the legacy of the marriage between Arviragus and Genvissa, stressing British and Roman harmony. Here, the Roll-maker minimised conflict between the British and the Romans and accentuated the positive aspects of their relationship.

Several generations after Arviragus, according to Geoffrey, the Roman Senate sent Severus (the historical Roman Emperor Septimius Severus, r. 193-211) to rule over the Britons. Geoffrey wrote that upon landing in Britain, Severus engaged in battle with the Britons and forced them to submit to him.⁸⁷ He further stated that Severus "strove to plague those Britons whom he had failed to subdue with such dire oppression that they were forced to flee...".⁸⁸ The Roll makes no mention of this despotism. Severus, referred to as "Severus the Roman" in both the genealogy and commentary, is stated to have "obtained the royal crown, because Lucius [his predecessor] had no offspring to succeed him" (CRC055). The commentary then mentions a wall he built between Deria and Albany (what we now know as Hadrian's Wall, formally attributed to Severus), and his two sons who succeeded him, Bassianus and Geta. This account fits the pattern established in the previous two commentaries discussed above; the Roll-maker once again minimised conflict between the British and the Romans. Severus, who in Geoffrey's account is portrayed as a tyrant who brought havoc to the Britons, is discussed on the Roll as if he were an ordinary king. Severus's character is edited by the Roll-maker from the original primary source to remove any antagonistic qualities. Instead, he is portrayed simply as a Roman official who filled the position left by Lucius, maintaining a sense of continuity throughout the Roll.

The three commentaries which have been analysed in this section underline the Roll-maker's selective approach towards his primary source, the *HRB*. It has been established that Geoffrey of Monmouth was the primary source for this part of the Roll, which can be seen by matching the narrative on the Roll with that in the *HRB*. The Roll-maker, however, did not adopt the same tone as Geoffrey, using the narrative in his account to create his own image of the relationship between Britain and Rome. This narrative is clearly one in which the two were equal entities who existed at the same time and interacted with each other symbiotically.

⁸⁷ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, p. 98.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

Rome and its leaders, namely Julius Caesar, Claudius, and Severus, are not portrayed as antagonistic; the Roll recognises them as prestigious and powerful figures who in some cases have as much right to be in Britain as any British king. In doing this, the Roll-maker retains continuity and peace throughout the Roll, strengthening the integrity of the genealogy. This idea of continuity is key when applied to this portion of the Roll. But why does he do this?

England and the Holy Roman Empire

The Roll-maker's selective editing of the *HRB* to convey a harmonious relationship between Britain and the Romans is clear and obvious. Why he did this is the subject of this section. To answer this, perceptions of the Holy Roman Empire (HRE) in medieval England are explored. This will establish whether there is any contemporary reason a semi-fraternal relationship between England and the Romans would be portrayed on the Roll. Any allusions to the HRE in general on the Roll will also be explored. CRC089, which states that the Roman Empire was transferred to the authority of Charlemagne, will be a focus of this survey, as it presents a crucial link between the crown of England and the Imperial crown. This study will reveal more about medieval English attitudes towards the Empire and the Roll-maker's methodology. The Roll-maker's true motivations for editing his source cannot be known for sure, but this section will explore the most likely reasoning for this.⁸⁹

The HRE was founded on Christmas day in 800 when Pope Leo III crowned the Frankish king, Charlemagne, the Emperor of the Romans. The circumstances surrounding Leo and Charlemagne's motivations are debated by modern historians; however, contemporaries saw this new Roman Empire as a continuation of that from Antiquity.⁹⁰ That this notion carried on to the late Middle Ages in England is evident on Canterbury MS 1. CRC089 states: "In the year 769 [sic] the Roman Empire was transferred to the authority of Charlemagne...". To the Roll-maker, the Roman Empire which occupied Britain prior to the Saxon arrival is no different to the Empire of his own age. Diplomatically, England and the Empire enjoyed a relatively peaceful coexistence in the Middle Ages. Peter Wilson argues that this is because "both countries were sufficiently distant not to be immediate competitors."⁹¹ Nevertheless, there were instances of conflict between England and the

⁸⁹ For a passive for portrayal of the Romans from a French perspective, see: Chris Jones, "Geoffroi of Courlon and Political Perceptions in Later Medieval France", *Viator* vol. 47, no. 1 (2016), pp. 158-189.

⁹⁰ Peter Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire: A Thousand Years of Europe's History* (London: Penguin, 2017), p. 27.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

Empire, most notably in 1192 when King Richard I of England (r. 1189-1199) was apprehended by the duke of Austria, who subsequently gave him as a hostage to Emperor Henry VI (r. 1191-1197). Richard was released only upon the payment of a massive ransom of 150,000 silver marks and an English acceptance of Imperial authority.⁹² Despite this, Anglo-Imperial relations were for the most part good throughout the Middle Ages, characterised by multiple attempts to build military alliances between the two powers during this period.⁹³

The Treaty of Canterbury (1416) was one important alliance between England and the Empire. The treaty was signed by then German king, and later Emperor, Sigismund (king of the Romans: r. 1411-1437; Emperor: r. 1433-1437) and Henry V of England. The treaty was initially designed to end the papal schism; Sigismund believed that the constant conflict between England and France was a major hurdle in resolving the schism.⁹⁴ When treaty negotiations with the French failed, Sigismund was warmly received in England by Henry V. The outcome of this was that England and the Empire became engaged in a mutually beneficial offensive and defensive alliance and that France was now encircled by two hostile powers, a massive boon for England who had been warring with France for decades.⁹⁵ Although neither England nor the Empire's militaries were mobilised to support the other, this is a major example of a recent contemporary alliance between the two countries, one which the English would have seen as hugely beneficial for their ongoing campaign against France, especially considering Henry even convinced Sigismund to recognise his claim to the French throne.⁹⁶ As the Lancastrian claim to the French crown features prominently on Canterbury MS 1, it is logical to see why the Roll-maker endeavoured to reduce hostilities between England and the classical Roman Empire.

English claims to Imperial authority throughout the Roll could also explain a sympathetic description of the Romans of Antiquity. This can be seen in the Latin transcription of CRC089, in the Roll-maker's description of Charlemagne. CRC089 states:

"Anno gratie 769^o translatum est Imperium Romanum in subiectioe Karoli Magni, regis

⁹² Ibid., p. 215.

⁹³ Len Scales, "The Empire in Translation: English Perspectives on imperium and Emperors, 1220-1440", *The Plantagenet Empire, 1259-1453. Proceedings of the 2014 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Peter Crooks, David Green, and W. Mark Ormrod (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2016), p. 60.

⁹⁴ John Wagner, *Encyclopedia of the Hundred Years War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2016), p. 76.

⁹⁵ Norman Simms, "The Visit of King Sigismund to England, 1416", *Hungarian Studies Review* vol. 17, no. 2 (1990), pp. 23-24. See also: Peter Earle, *The Life and Times of Henry V* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1972), pp. 148-149.

⁹⁶ Earle, *Henry V*, p. 149.

Francorum...". In this commentary, Charlemagne (*Karoli Magni*) is characterised as *regis Francorum*, or "King of the Franks." Contemporaries would have read this as "King of the French." CRC089, therefore, distinguishes Charlemagne as both the Roman Emperor (*"Imperium Romanum"*) and the King of France. Jones identified a similar case of how contemporaries understood the separation of these titles, explaining how the Dionysian monk, Primat, intentionally edited the Latin source he translated to express that the Carolingian rulers were both kings *and* emperors.⁹⁷ That the Roll also makes this distinction is significant because it also strives to present the English kings as the true heirs of the French crown.⁹⁸ By attaching the imperial title to the French throne, the Roll-maker forces an English claim to the HRE. This is compounded by the representation of Henry IV's daughter, Blanche (1392-1409), who is referred to on the Roll as "Empress Blanche" (CRN565). This is curious because Blanche was not married to an Emperor, rather to an Elector Palatine, Louis III (1378-1436). The reason the Roll attaches the title of Empress to Blanche is likely because Louis's father, Rupert, was the king of Germany (r. 1400-1410) at the time of her marriage to Louis. Nevertheless, by the time the Roll was constructed Rupert was long dead, and the House of Luxembourg had replaced Rupert/Louis's House of Wittelsbach as the holders of the title of King of Germany. By still referring to Blanche as an Empress, the Roll-maker once again exaggerates England's connections to the Empire. Other references to the Empire include Emperor Otto IV (CRN455; r. 1209-1215) as a grandson of Henry II, and Richard King of Germany/King of the Romans (CRN465; r. 1257-1274), the only Englishman to hold this title, represented as a son of King John on the central tree. The Empire is present on the Roll, but any intentional claim to the imperial throne is subtle.

These allusions to connections with the Empire on Canterbury MS 1 should be viewed in light of contemporary English notions of empire more generally. Len Scales has explored this topic at length so this discussion will not spend much time explaining the finer details.⁹⁹ It is clear, however, that notions of empire existed in medieval England. Jones discusses how imperial symbolism became increasingly attached to Lancastrian kingship during the reign of Henry IV.¹⁰⁰ This is also evident on the Roll with Egbert's roundel

⁹⁷ Chris Jones, "Understanding Political Conceptions in the Later Middle Ages", *Viator* vol. 42, no. 2 (2011), pp. 97-98.

⁹⁸ For the Roll's claim to the French throne, see: Shiota, "The French Connection." <https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/Prop/france.shtml>.

⁹⁹ Scales, "The Empire in Translation", pp. 49-71.

¹⁰⁰ Chris Jones, "Undefined Terms: Empires and Emperors in Late Medieval French Thought", *The Medieval History Journal* vol. 20, no. 2 (2017), p. 329.

(CRN392) on the central tree, which is decorated with an imperial style crown. Lancastrian imperial ideation continued into Henry V's reign; after Sigismund's visit efforts were made to equate the English king's prestige with that of the King of the Romans.¹⁰¹ English imperial ideas, however, also took an insular form, thinking about imperium over the British Isles. Jones, incidentally, used Egbert's decorated roundel to support this idea.¹⁰² Imperial ideas separate from kingship were present in medieval England. With this in mind, allusions to the Empire, or empire in general, on Canterbury MS 1 were likely done with knowledge of the connotations surrounding the idea.

Shirota's analysis of political thought on Canterbury MS 1 showed that contemporary events affected how certain aspects are represented. She demonstrated that historical/mythical instances of royal deposition on the Roll were given prominence to justify the 1399 deposition of Richard II, which led to the accession of the Lancastrians to the English throne.¹⁰³ The present analysis has shown that this approach can also be applied to the representation of the Roman Empire on the Roll. England's contemporary relationship with the Empire can be used to explain why the Roll-maker was reluctant to stay true to Geoffrey's account of this period. Other factors such as the Roll-maker's own allusions to England's role in the Empire may also explain this. The representation of individuals such as Blanche suggests that the Roll-maker was trying to interpolate England into the affairs of the contemporary Empire, just as Geoffrey of Monmouth did with the classical Roman Empire. CRC089 also suggests a possible subtle claim to imperial authority. Equating the Roman Imperial title with the King of the French adds imperial connotations to the claim to the French crown further down the Roll. Nevertheless, whatever the reason for the Roll-maker's semi-fraternal portrayal of the Romans, an understanding of empire and Imperial authority existed in contemporary England, meaning that the Roll-maker likely knew the concept he was engaging with. Whatever the Roll-maker's reasoning for his portrayal of the Romans, it is clear and obvious that he selectively edited Geoffrey's account. This analysis has offered several reasons for why he did this.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Shirota, "Unrolling History", pp. 87-93.

Medieval appropriation of the Classical World

Canterbury MS 1 is not unique in its use of appropriated classical figures. This use of appropriation to compliment national identities was a feature of medieval historiography centuries before the construction of Canterbury MS 1. Although historiography on this topic is sparse, Ben Guy's study on the appropriation of Constantine, Helena, and Maximus in medieval Welsh texts (c. 800-1250) contains an analysis of these figures in the *HRB*.¹⁰⁴ Guy's article will be used as a key text to consider these figures in an English context. This section first outlines the extent of the appropriation of classical figures on Canterbury MS 1, before comparing the adoption of these figures on the Roll with that in Welsh texts as outlined by Guy. Canterbury MS 1's appropriation goes right back to the beginning of the Roll with the biblical and pagan material. This suggests that English genealogists had to borrow their early history from other cultures. A similar process was undertaken for the period covering the classical period, using historical Roman Emperors and representing them as British kings.

There are seven Roman Emperors on the genealogy who are represented as kings of Britain. These are (in order of appearance): Septimius Severus (CRN263 – r. 193-211), Bassianus/Caracalla (CRN264 – r. 211-217), Geta (CRN265 – r. 209-211), Constantius (CRN270 – r. 293-306), Constantine the Great (CRN271 – r. 306-324), Maximian (CRN273 – r. 383-388), and Constantine III (CRN275 – r. 409-411). The placement of these emperors as British kings on the genealogy is once again derived from Geoffrey of Monmouth, who maintained a lineal succession of British kings by appropriating Roman emperors to that role. In doing this, Geoffrey ascribed each emperor with characteristics to make them fit the narrative he wanted to tell. However, it should also be acknowledged that Geoffrey was not the first to ascribe British characteristics to classical figures. Nennius's earlier *Historia Brittonum* (ninth century) names Constantine and Maximus (Maximian) as emperors who served in Britain, as well as discussing other familiar names such as Severus.¹⁰⁵ The interpolation of these Roman figures into British history was a process which took place over several centuries through numerous chroniclers, meaning it was not entirely invented by Geoffrey.

It is also apparent that many of the emperors who are displayed on the genealogy had some sort of historical relationship to Britain. According to Geoffrey, Maximian, a Roman

¹⁰⁴ Ben Guy, "Constantine, Helena, Maximus: on the appropriation of Roman history in medieval Wales, c.800–1250", *Journal of Medieval History* vol. 44, no. 4 (2018), pp. 381-405.

¹⁰⁵ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, pp. 23-24.

senator, was invited to succeed Octavius as king of Britain. Under Maximian, the British waged successful military campaigns in Gaul and Germany, before attacking Rome, where he was eventually killed by “friends” of his successor, Gratianus.¹⁰⁶ In actuality, Magnus Maximus, a Spanish native, was a Roman soldier serving in Britain where he was proclaimed emperor during a military rebellion. He served the extent of his emperorship in the Western half of the Empire where he was most active in Gaul and Britain, hence why British historians such as Geoffrey adopted him as a king of Britain.¹⁰⁷ Another example is Bassianus (Caracalla). Both prior to and during his reign, Caracalla spent time in Britain campaigning, as well as fortifying the Antonine Wall.¹⁰⁸ The same reasoning is applied to Septimius Severus’s appearance on the genealogy. Geoffrey and previous British sources based their legendary accounts on historical events, showing why these particular figures were appropriated as rulers of Britain.

The appropriation of classical individuals was not unique to England. Guy’s work reveals that similar figures were appropriated in Welsh genealogical texts. Constantine, Helena, and Maximian were all the subject of appropriation in Welsh texts, playing their own significant roles. Guy notes that by the ninth and tenth centuries, all three were claimed as ancestors by important Welsh dynasties.¹⁰⁹ This is similar to Canterbury MS 1, on which the Lancastrian dynasty claimed these figures, among many others of importance, as their ancestors. Following the publication of the *HRB*, Maximian (or Maximus) became the subject of his own vernacular Welsh prose narrative, showing that after Geoffrey’s *HRB* appeared, the tradition surrounding many of these figures expanded and continued.¹¹⁰ This indicates that the appropriation of classical figures into the tradition of other peoples was a recognised occurrence prior to Canterbury MS 1 elsewhere in Britain. This shows why the Roll-maker and Geoffrey himself were able to adopt these figures for their genealogy of British and English kings.

Canterbury MS 1’s use of appropriated historical classical figures is clear and extensive. Geoffrey’s apparent unashamed appropriation of these figures for the advancement of his narrative tradition is transposed clearly onto Canterbury MS 1; however, the Roll-maker added his own alterations where he saw fit. Geoffrey’s method for appropriating many

¹⁰⁶ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 104-111.

¹⁰⁷ For Maximus’s career, see: Frere, *Britannia*, pp. 353-354.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

¹⁰⁹ Guy, “Constantine”, p. 386.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 381-382.

of these individuals is clear, adopting only those who had some association with Britain during their reign. The use of appropriated classical figures dates the Roll as a truly medieval document, yet the question remains as to why this appropriation took place. Why did the Roll-maker (and Geoffrey) feel it necessary to include these appropriated individuals on the genealogy of British/English kings at all?

The function of the Classical material

The classical material's function on Canterbury MS 1 is to interpolate Britain into the affairs of Rome. Although there is no explicit statement on the Roll that claims Britain played more of an integral role in the history of the Roman Empire than it actually did, the extent to which the Roll incorporates prominent Roman figures into Britain's history suggests that the Roll-maker intended to make a connection which represented a relationship of this nature. By proving (or at least attempting to prove) a connection to a swathe of Roman imperial elites, the prestige of the genealogy is enhanced. This is made even more prestigious by the continuity which the Roll-maker promoted with the unbroken central line. He aimed to highlight the idea that Britain and Rome were intertwined in a semi-fraternal relationship in which one power did not dominate the other. Once again, this was done to preserve the reputation of Britain, showing that the Britons were and had always been on the same level as the Roman Empire. Finally, it is also worth mentioning that the groundwork for this symbiotic relationship between Britain and Rome was laid earlier on the Roll, where the origins of the Britons were established. They were of the same stock as the Romans, they were also Trojans. As discussed in the introduction of this chapter, modern historiography on fifteenth-century English ideas regarding the classical Roman Empire's prestige is sparse, so this section will rely on primary sources and Canterbury MS 1 itself for its analysis.

Early on Canterbury MS 1, allusions are made to the common origins between the Romans and the British. Brutus (CRN115), the mythical founder of Britain, is only three generations removed from Aeneas (CRN108), the mythical founder of Rome. Furthermore, the genealogy branches off from Aeneas to show the lineage of Romulus and Remus, the legendary first kings of Rome, who appear in their own roundel on the genealogy (CRN112). This connection between Aeneas and Brutus, and between Aeneas and Romulus/Remus, is made explicit in CRC010, which outlines the generations connecting Aeneas to Brutus, followed by a walkthrough of how Aeneas is connected to Romulus and Remus. That these

two connections are made in the same commentary, one after the other, strengthens any association made between the Romans and the Britons. By connecting British and Roman origins together early on, the groundwork is laid, allowing for future connections between the two peoples further down the Roll.

Upon reaching the classical period, the Roll-maker, or more accurately his source, Geoffrey of Monmouth, reached a problem. Despite attempts to maintain an equal status with Rome, there was no way to get around the fact that Britain was eventually defeated and conquered by the Romans, firstly by Julius Caesar, and then by Claudius. As a mitigating factor, Geoffrey invented an earlier British conquest of Gaul and Rome, under the brother kings, Belinus and Brennius.¹¹¹ According to Geoffrey, the brothers quarrelled over who should be the king of Britain. After reconciling with each other, they united and conquered all of Gaul and Germany, before besieging and sacking Rome. Canterbury MS 1 summarises this story, stating that they defeated the Roman consuls, Gallio and Porcenna, and “took Rome with Brennius remaining in Italy” (CRC033). Geoffrey himself might have appropriated this tale. Brennius appears to be based on Brennus, a Gaulish chieftain who led the Gauls on their sack of Rome in 390 BC, the last time Rome was sacked for 800 years.¹¹² This reveals another case where Geoffrey appropriated history to suit the narrative he wanted to portray. We know that Geoffrey drew upon classical sources such as Livy, who mentioned Brennus by name as a Gaulish chieftain who sacked Rome.¹¹³ By inserting this tale prior to the Roman invasions, Geoffrey, and subsequently the Roll-maker, have already established British military superiority over the Romans, softening the imminent blow of Julius Caesar’s victory several centuries later. Although the Roll-maker may not have been aware of Geoffrey’s appropriation of Brennus, the fact that he chose to include it on the Roll is worth mentioning. It suggests that the Roll-maker possessed the wider motive of establishing British military superiority over Rome (or at least equality with that of Rome). This is one of the key functions of the classical material on the Roll, to preserve British historical military strength in the face of Roman conquest.

Before arriving at Caesar’s invasion of Britain on the Roll, the Roll-maker has already established that Britain and Rome have shared origins, and that Britain can defeat the

¹¹¹ This story is found in: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 71-78.

¹¹² Accounts of Brennus are found in the following primary sources: Livy, *History of Rome* 5:38, trans. Rev. Canon Roberts (New York, New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. 1912); Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives* vol. 2, trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library, 1923), pp. 131-168.

¹¹³ Lewis Thorpe, *The History of the Kings of Britain: Introduction* (London, The Folio Society, 1969), p. 18.

Romans in battle. This makes the Roll's positive account of Britain and Rome's relationship, following Caesar's victory over Cassibelaunus, more believable. Throughout the classical segment, the genealogy is shared between British kings and Roman kings of Britain. From Cassibelaunus to Constantine III, there are eleven British kings and nine Roman kings, a strikingly even balance considering Britain was supposed to be under Roman control during this period. Furthermore, at no point in the commentaries for this segment is Rome referred to as being a superior power. Even Geoffrey of Monmouth acknowledges Rome's domination, stating "the entire world was under their [Rome's] sway."¹¹⁴ This seemingly equal relationship between the British and the Romans on the Roll is strengthened by their shared origins, and almost hides the fact that Britain had been under Roman control for 400 years. A medieval reader of the Roll would not have elevated the Romans above the Britons as their conquerors; they would find a period in which Britain and Rome engaged in each other's affairs without one being more dominant than the other.

Despite all this, the prestige of the Roman Empire for a medieval reader cannot be denied. Medieval English chroniclers all discuss the Romans in some capacity. Higden, for example, devoted the majority of volumes four and five of his *Polychronicon* to recounting their deeds.¹¹⁵ Henry of Huntingdon also devoted a chapter to the Romans, titled the "The Kingdom of the Romans", in which he lists the emperors and their deeds.¹¹⁶ Even Nennius, before Geoffrey, engaged in brief discussion of Rome in his *Historia Brittonum*.¹¹⁷ This would suggest that the Romans were clearly regarded as important in the history of the world during the Middle Ages. The prestige associated with putting Roman Emperors on the genealogy of English kings is clear. This fact is demonstrated most obviously by the inclusion of Constantine the Great on the central line (CRN271). Constantine is of course the emperor who legalised Christianity in Rome and was instrumental in growing the religion throughout the Empire. To an historian of the Middle Ages, the reasons for claiming Constantine as a British king are clear and obvious, due to his status not just as a great Roman emperor, but also a great figure in Christendom. Timothy Barnes acknowledges this, stating that "Constantine embodied the standard against which medieval rulers were

¹¹⁴ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, p. 94.

¹¹⁵ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 4 & 5.

¹¹⁶ Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, pp. 10-77.

¹¹⁷ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, pp. 11-12.

measured.”¹¹⁸ The prestige associated with claiming descent from such a figure, therefore, goes without saying.

The classical material on the Roll serves specific functions. At first glance, the Britons were subjugated by Caesar and remained under Rome’s dominion until the coming of Vortigern followed by the Arthurian legends. However, the narrative on the Roll serves a much greater function. By establishing the common origins of the Britons and the Romans early on, the Roll-maker created a fundamental connection between the two peoples, adding a sense of equality between Britain and the great Empire. This idea is enhanced by Belinus and Brennius’s sack of Rome centuries before Caesar invaded Britain for the first time. Equality between Britain and Rome is maintained throughout the classical material, as Rome does not clearly dominate the British throughout the account of their interactions. Finally, the prestige associated with claiming descent from Roman Emperors is a key function. This is made clear by the way classical Rome is treated in contemporary English chronicles. By revealing the different functions which this material serves on Canterbury MS 1, more can be understood about how fifteenth-century English historians viewed their past, as well as their conception of how they wanted to be represented in their own history.

Conclusion

The Roll-maker clearly wanted to promote equality or coexistence between Britain and Rome. This was done in several ways. By portraying the Roman invaders not as invaders, the Roll-maker minimised conflict between the Romans and the British, promoting more of a symbiotic relationship than an antagonistic one. The reason for this lies in contemporary relations between Britain and the Empire; the Roll-maker wanted to portray a friendly relationship to preserve fifteenth-century alliances. By not acknowledging that the Romans dominated the Britons, the Roll-maker put Britain on a par with the Roman Empire, something which he does through selective editing. This idea is strengthened by the description of British and Roman common origins under Aeneas early on the Roll. It has also been shown that its continuity and focus exclusively on Britain made the *HRB* a prime candidate for the Roll-maker to employ for this material. At the same time, this analysis has demonstrated that the Roll-maker used his own creative licence in representing the classical.

¹¹⁸ Timothy Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 273.

This was done to convey the idea that Britain and Rome were engaged in an equal relationship, rather than one in which one power dominated the other. In other words, the Roll-maker selectively edited the account in his primary source, Geoffrey of Monmouth, to construct the narrative that he wanted to present. His voice is therefore evident through these edits. This thesis will now show that his voice can also be seen through the representation of origins of people myths on the Roll.

Chapter Two

Patriarchs and Progenitors: The Roll's Biblical Origin Myth

Introduction

Canterbury MS 1 and all Noah rolls are by their very nature origins of people documents, yet they have never been studied as such. Beginning with Noah, the biblical material of Canterbury MS 1 blends traditional myth from Genesis with influences from later chronicles, creating an amalgam of biblical and exegetical mythology. It is this creative and confusing touch from the Roll-maker which makes the biblical segment of the Roll worth studying. This chapter begins by establishing the boundaries for the biblical segment. This will involve a detailed description of the individuals from both the commentary and genealogy of this segment, laying the foundations for a study of the purpose and function of the biblical material on not just Canterbury MS 1, but other rolls from the Noah group. From there, a survey of the more apocryphal elements on the Roll will be carried out, giving an idea of the nuances of the narrative told for this segment. The function of the biblical material will then be analysed, along with the purpose of origins of people myths (*origines gentium*) in medieval England. This will give context to why and how the biblical origins of the kings of England are displayed. The likely primary sources for the biblical material will finally be discussed, offering a glimpse into the methods the Roll-maker used when constructing his narrative. Although the biblical material may appear unpromising, it can reveal much about the Roll-maker's methodology and intentions. Analysing the selection of these sources will reveal that the Roll-maker had access to an array of sources and that he utilised texts other than the Bible to construct his biblical narrative. Biblical material on rolls and chronicles is often dismissed and ignored in studies of medieval works of history. The present study will show that this is a mistake; valuable insights can be gained from a focused study of the obscure early content on the Roll.

The biblical segment of Canterbury MS 1 is found at the beginning of the manuscript. Noah, the first individual represented, is characterised by an ark enclosed in a rose, with a smaller red rose superimposed onto it, thought to represent the Beaufort family.¹¹⁹ From Noah, his three sons are directly descended: Shem, Japhet (Japheth), and Ham. No descendants are shown from Shem, and from Ham we get only two more generations, concluding with the biblical first King of Babylon, Nimrod. It is from Japheth that the central

¹¹⁹ Chris Jones, "Latin and Illumination", *Canterbury Roll* (2017).
<https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/origin/latin.shtml>.

tree is descended, making him an ancestor of the kings of Britain. As well as this, a line of German kings branches from Japheth, which develops into the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy, and thus the rest of the genealogy of English kings right up to Edward IV. For the purposes of this study, the biblical segment of the genealogy can be defined as beginning with Noah and ending with Japheth's grandson, Cethis, who is mentioned in Genesis 10:4 as "Cetthim." Parts of the German line will also be referenced in discussions about apocryphal and legendary figures from biblical exegesis and national origin myths. The commentaries belonging to the biblical segment are limited to those which run concurrently to the biblical genealogy, and those which mention any biblical figures from the genealogy. By this definition there are three commentaries which fit this description, these being the first three on the Roll (CRC001, CRC002, and CRC003). It is this segment which this chapter will analyse, aiming to find the sources used by the Roll-maker for the biblical material, and what the selection of these sources can reveal about medieval English historians' conception of their past. The biblical material on a genealogical roll has never been the subject of an extensive study, showing the novelty of the present analysis.

Noah and his descendants

Noah was a key early patriarch in medieval Christian theology, holding a significant place in biblical myths and motifs. His inclusion in Saint Augustine's "six ages of the world" concept (Noah and the Flood signalled the beginning of the second age),¹²⁰ as well as being displayed alongside other traditional biblical patriarchs such as Job and Daniel in medieval art, demonstrates this significance.¹²¹ Augustine's "six ages" myth was hugely influential throughout the following centuries, being explored and employed by subsequent theologians such as Bede and Isidore of Seville, who themselves proved influential in Christian theology.¹²² Noah as a common descendent is also found in earlier English chronicles such as Nennius's *Historia Brittonum* and William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, as well as numerous other popular medieval histories. This shows his importance as not just a

¹²⁰ For more on Augustine's "six ages" idea, see: R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 17-19. Augustine's six ages are repeated in: Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 18.

¹²¹ Berthold Kress, "Noah, Daniel and Job -- the three righteous men of Ezekiel 14.14 in medieval art", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* vol. 67 (2004), pp. 258-267.

¹²² Michael Allen, "Universal History 300-1000: Origins and Western Developments", *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Deliyannis (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 26-35.

biblical figure, but also a key historical actor in medieval society.¹²³ His three sons, who are all displayed on the genealogy of Canterbury MS 1, arguably play more of a significant role in medieval peoples' conception of their origins. According to Genesis, after the Flood, the peoples and lands of the world were divided between Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 10:1-32). The exact regions which each son's descendants came to occupy is somewhat ambiguous in the Bible, but scholars (and the Canterbury Roll itself) have allocated Europe to Japheth, Asia to Shem, and Africa to Ham.¹²⁴ This supposed division of territories has seen the addition of associated connotations behind each people, the nature of which will be discussed below. This shows the significance of Noah and his sons and demonstrates why they play such an integral part on Canterbury MS 1.

It must first be acknowledged that when Genesis itself was written (thought to be between c. tenth century BC and the sixth century BC), there was no clear-cut continental division between Europe, Asia, and Africa in contemporary thought.¹²⁵ It was not until the ancient Greeks that "Europe, Asia, and Africa" became common and accepted terms for geographic division. Even then, however, there was no universally accepted distinction between the continents, they were names for general areas.¹²⁶ Benjamin Braude states: "they were separate regions of one world, not separate continents."¹²⁷ From Antiquity, early Judaeo-Christian scholars began to postulate on the division of these territories between Noah's sons. Flavius Josephus (first century AD) was the first to engage with this concept, outlining specific lands which the heirs of Noah's sons inhabited.¹²⁸ Subsequent centuries saw exegeses which speculated on this territorial division. It was not until the Middle Ages that Noah's sons were each allocated their own named territory.¹²⁹ By this period, various biblical exegeses proclaimed Japheth as the ancestor of Europeans, Shem the ancestor of

¹²³ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 22; William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, p. 177.

¹²⁴ Benjamin Braude, "The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods", *The William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 54, no. 1 (1997), pp. 108-109; E. Wajntraub and G. Wajntraub, "Noah and his family on Medieval Maps", *The Hereford World Map: Medieval World Maps and their Context*, ed. P.D.A. Harvey (London: The British Library, 2006), pp. 383-385.

¹²⁵ For more discussion on Genesis's dates of authorship, see: John Barton and John Muddiman, *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 39-41.

¹²⁶ James Romm, "Continents, Climates, and Cultures: Greek Theories of Global Structure", *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies*, ed. Kurt Raaflaub and Richard Talbert (Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2010), pp. 215-231.

¹²⁷ Braude, "The Sons of Noah", p. 109.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 111; Flavius Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* book 1, trans. Louis H. Feldman (Boston: Brill, 2004), pp. 45-53.

¹²⁹ However, there was no uniform agreement on the exact division of territories. The developments which led to this are discussed in detail in: Braude, "The Sons of Noah", pp. 109-120.

Asian peoples, and Ham the ancestor of African peoples.¹³⁰ This fact is evidenced by Canterbury MS 1 itself, which explicitly states this in the opening commentary of the Roll (CRC001). This division of the known world between Noah's three sons demonstrates why he was thought to be the common ancestor of all peoples; medieval scholars were able to trace European, Asian, and African peoples back to him.

There are two aspects of the way Noah's sons are represented which bears discussion here. The first of these involves the curious line of Ham. Ham's line of descent is shown to the right of Japheth and only goes as far as Nimrod, who is two generations removed from Ham. Displaying only two generations after Ham is not unique to Canterbury MS 1, as this also appears on other Adam and Noah rolls, making this a common feature.¹³¹ However, what is most distinctive about this line is its colour, black, as opposed to red which is the dominant colour of the central tree. It is possible that the reason for this lies in the curse placed on Ham's lineage by Noah in Genesis, after Ham told his brothers about his drunken father's nakedness (Gen. 9:20-27). Upon discovering what Ham had done, Noah placed a curse on Canaan, Ham's fourth son, declaring that he shall be a servant of Japheth and Shem's people (Europeans and Asians). In more recent centuries this story has been used to justify African slavery in Europe and the Americas, as not only did Canaan (and Ham) supposedly reign in Africa, but it has been speculated that Canaan's skin turned black as a result of the curse.¹³² However, since Canaan is not represented on the genealogy this is likely not the reason for the black line. Another more probable explanation for the black line lies further down the central tree in the way that Brutus and his sons are represented.

Brutus and Noah are portrayed in similar ways on the Roll. Both have three sons, one of whom is on the central line, another to the left without any descendants shown, and another branching to the right with a dark coloured line with multiple descendants. Parallels can also be seen between the Noah and Brutus myths themselves. The division of land between their respective sons, and them both being chosen by (a) God for a specific and epic

¹³⁰ Explicit use of the names of these continents can be seen in the *Historia Scholastica*. A version of Genesis was translated into English in the fifteenth century: "The Historye of the Patriarks", trans. Saralyn Daly, Ohio State University Doctoral Thesis (1950), pp. 34-35. This translation and its significance is discussed below.

¹³¹ See for example: Liverpool Mayer 12012; Bodleian Library: Add Marshall MS 135, Rolls 10; British Library: MS Sloane MS 3732A; Queens College Oxford Library: MS 167.

¹³² For more on the racial connotations behind Noah's curse on Canaan, see: David M. Whitford, *The Curse of Ham in the Early Modern Era: The Bible and the Justifications for Slavery* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 1-17; David Goldenberg, *Black and Slave: The Origins and History of the Curse of Ham* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), pp. 146-159; Carlos Almeida, "Inhabitants of this black Ethiopia, descendants of Ham - Ham's curse in missionary literature on the central western region of the African continent (16th-17th centuries)", *Estudos Ibero-Americanos* vol. 44, no. 3 (2018), pp. 410-419.

task are both examples.¹³³ This technique of drawing parallels between different characters and motifs on Canterbury MS 1 was identified by Shirota in her discussion of how deposition is portrayed throughout the Roll. She used the examples of Archigallo (CRN216) and Eynan (CRN222) as deposed kings on the Roll, showing that the way in which they are portrayed in the commentary set a standard for English kingship. Shirota argued that the description of depositions of mythical British kings on the Roll showed what a justified deposition looked like, allowing contemporaries to apply that to Richard II's deposition.¹³⁴ By representing Brutus in a similar way to Noah, the Roll-maker makes a similar kind of parallel, equating the two progenitors with each other. This gives credence to the Brutus myth and contributes to his image as the father of the British, much like Noah, who Henry of Huntingdon refers to as "the father of all."¹³⁵

The other poignant aspect of the portrayal of Noah's sons concerns Japheth. The reason for his placement on the central tree, as opposed to branching off like his brothers, lies in the allocation of territories among Noah's sons. As stated above, Japheth's descendants went on to inhabit Europe, which is why he is shown on the central tree as the ancestor of British kings instead of Ham and Shem.¹³⁶ However, another line branches off from Japheth, showing a genealogy of German kings. The people who are displayed on this line are somewhat ambiguous, as there is no historical evidence for their existence, which is seemingly based on Germanic or Anglo-Saxon mythology. Available primary source material for these individuals is either inaccurate or incomplete compared to what is displayed on the Roll.¹³⁷ Nevertheless, this line develops into the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy and eventually the line of medieval kings who were contemporary to the Roll's construction. By showing this German connection from Japheth to the Heptarchy and the subsequent English kings, the Roll-maker guarantees that there is no questioning the legitimacy of English kings' ancestry back to Japheth and more importantly, Noah. Therefore, by looking at the Roll-maker's utilisation of Japheth, we can get a sense of how important it was that English kings be tied to a biblical past. This was so important that a connection to Japheth was intentionally

¹³³ For Brutus's divine encounter, see: Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 51-52. For Noah's divine encounter see: Gen. 6:13-22.

¹³⁴ Shirota, "Royal Depositions", pp. 52-61.

¹³⁵ Henry Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, p. 503.

¹³⁶ "The Historie of the Patriarks", trans. Daly, p. 35.

¹³⁷ See: William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, p. 177; Roger of Hovedon, *The Annals of Roger of Hovedon: Comprising the History of England and of other Countries of Europe from A.D. 732 to A.D. 1201* vol. 1, trans. Henry T. Riley (London: H D Bohn, 1853), pp. 40-41.

constructed, despite there being no biblical evidence supporting any direct relationship between Japheth and a line of German kings.

This section has offered a detailed description of the way Noah and his sons are represented on Canterbury MS 1, as well as the significance of these characters in medieval England. By understanding these aspects of the biblical material on the Roll, other parts of the manuscript are given context, demonstrated by the way Brutus is represented and the idea of paralleling. Furthermore, by discerning the underlying themes inherent in what is represented, such as the continental division between Noah's three sons, further context is given to why certain individuals are represented the way they are, such as Japheth's placement on the central tree rather than his brothers. This assessment has laid the foundation for a critical analysis of the biblical segment and the primary source base used in the construction of this material. This chapter will now move to deconstruct some of the more apocryphal elements at play in the biblical segment, both on the genealogy and in the commentary.

A fourth son of Noah?

Since Genesis was written there have been countless works undertaken by biblical scholars seeking to interpret its details, looking to apply its subject matter to their own national and political circumstances. The Bible mentions only three sons of Noah - Shem, Japheth, and Ham. Late antique and medieval biblical exegeses, however, uncovered sons of Noah of which the Bible makes no mention. Whether it be the ark-born "Sceaf," or the post-diluvial "Jonichus," English medieval biblical scholars were not unfamiliar with this idea, adding to the ever-growing lore surrounding Noah and his sons. Canterbury MS 1 is no different, with both Sceaf and Jonichus playing a role on the manuscript. By identifying the role of these apocryphal individuals in medieval exegesis, not only can the rationale behind the inclusion of these figures on Canterbury MS 1 be understood, but more can also be revealed about what medieval English scholars believed about their own biblical origins and biblical history/mythology itself.

Sceaf, an Anglo-Saxon invention, was the fourth son of Noah, born on the ark during the Flood, before becoming the ancestor of all Germanic and Northern European peoples. At least, this is the popular narrative that was told about Sceaf in Anglo-Saxon England. Appearing in early English chronicles, such as in the genealogy of King Æthelwulf in the

Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Scaef was presented as the ancestor of the Germanic, and subsequently, Anglo-Saxon peoples.¹³⁸ Daniel Anlezark explains that: “Genesis’s silence on the origins of the Anglo-Saxons presented a gap which an imaginative genealogist could fill.”¹³⁹ Scaef filled this gap, allowing for a direct and unquestioned relationship between the monarch and Noah. The question may be asked, though, of why genealogists had to invent a new son of Noah to claim biblical ancestry, rather than adopting one of the three mentioned in the Bible. The answer lies in traditional Germanic and Anglo-Saxon genealogical myths. Before Christianisation, the Germanic nobility were thought to be descended from the Germanic deity, Woden; the one-eyed god of wisdom and the dead.¹⁴⁰ His influence in England can still be viewed today in place names such as Woodnesborough (Kent), Wednesbury (West Midlands), and Wednesfield (West Midlands).¹⁴¹ However, when the Anglo-Saxons became Christianised in the early medieval period, the idea of claiming descent from a pagan god became untenable.¹⁴² Thomas Hill discusses this conundrum, adding that Anglo-Saxon antiquarians were forced to improvise as a result of the lack of biblical evidence of their kings’ higher status.¹⁴³ Thus, the ark-born son of Noah, Scaef, was introduced to West-Saxon genealogical tables, providing that desired and elusive biblical link between the rulers of England and the biblical origin story from Genesis.

Scaef was a popular figure for genealogists and antiquarians during the Anglo-Saxon period, remaining present in histories more contemporary to the Roll. However, his influence and role became somewhat confused in the later Middle Ages. He was replaced by Strephus as the ark-born son of Noah in the chronicles, and was relegated to being an unimportant descendent of Noah. This is demonstrated clearly not just in later medieval chronicles, but also on Canterbury MS 1 itself. Although it does not appear obvious at first, Scaef *does* appear on the Roll. He is given a new name: Steph, and is displayed on the line of German kings (CRN012). The reason we can determine that this “Steph” is a reference to Scaef is found in William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, which provides a genealogy of King Æthelwulf similar to the German line on the Canterbury Roll.¹⁴⁴ As with Scaef, most of

¹³⁸ *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. and trans. M. J. Swanton (London: J. M. Dent, 1996), pp. 66-67.

¹³⁹ Daniel Anlezark, *Water and Fire: The myth of the Flood in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 245.

¹⁴⁰ Brian Branston, *The Lost Gods of England* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp. 93-94.

¹⁴¹ A. L. Meany, “Woden and England: A Reconsideration of the Evidence”, *Folklore* vol. 77, no. 2 (1966), pp. 105-106.

¹⁴² The role of pagan figures in medieval England and on Canterbury MS 1 is explored in chapter three.

¹⁴³ Thomas Hill, “The Myth of the Ark-Born son of Noe and the West-Saxon Royal Genealogical Tables”, *The Harvard Theological Review* vol. 80, no. 3 (1987), p. 381.

¹⁴⁴ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, p. 177.

the names on William's genealogy appear slightly altered, but it is still possible to connect them with the corresponding names on Canterbury MS 1. Of the thirty-six names on the German line of the Roll, twenty-nine of them can be matched with a name on William's genealogy, making it the closest known English source to the German genealogy on the manuscript. To give some examples: Strephus (CRN007) on the Roll corresponds with Streph in William's list, Bedegius (CRN008) corresponds with Bedwig, and Gnala (CRN009) with Gwala. This suggests that this list was a potentially useful source for the Roll-maker for this material.

Sceaf's name is not the only aspect of his representation on the Roll that is different; his placement is also curious. As the fourth son of Noah, he filled the void left by Woden as the ancestor of Germanic and Anglo-Saxon peoples. On the Roll, however, not only is he not represented as a son of Noah, but he is also six generations removed from Noah's son, Japheth. Instead, the Roll lists a figure named "Strephus" as a son of Japheth, making Sceaf the great-great-great grandson of Strephus. Strephus is also listed in William of Malmesbury's genealogy, who calls him Streph, but this time he is a son of Noah himself. Furthermore, William's account adds that, instead of Sceaf, Streph was born in the Ark.¹⁴⁵ This indicates that Sceaf's role in the Germanic genealogy had changed not only in the years following the age of Anglo-Saxon dominance, but also in the years between William of Malmesbury's account (early twelfth century) and the construction of Canterbury MS 1 (fifteenth century). Anlezark identified that the evolution of Sceaf's role in history represents a confused "genealogical tradition which has lost its social context and ideological meaning" over time.¹⁴⁶ I argue that Canterbury MS 1 takes this point even further, showing a longer and therefore evolved version of William's genealogy, with further distortion to the names given by William.¹⁴⁷ This is evidence that English historians' conception of their own past and ancestry had evolved over time, indicating a development in how they viewed and constructed their history.

The idea of claiming descent from a fourth son of Noah had precedence in medieval times. The apocryphal post-diluvial son of Noah, Jonichus (also represented as Jonitus or

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Daniel Anlezark, "Sceaf, Japheth, and the origins of the Anglo-Saxons", *Anglo-Saxon England* vol. 31 (2002), p. 44.

¹⁴⁷ For a larger study on the development of Sceaf in English chronicles, see: Alexander M. Bruce, *Scyld and Sceaf: Expanding the Analogues* (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 43-54.

Ionitus) also makes an appearance on Canterbury MS 1.¹⁴⁸ Jonichus appears in the *Apocalypse*, the work of a Syrian Christian, referred to as the “Pseudo-Methodius,” as well as other biblical exegeses.¹⁴⁹ Like Scaef, he is portrayed as a son of Noah, but in this instance, he was born after the Flood. According to Pseudo-Methodius, Jonichus was born in Noah’s likeness and sent to the East (“where the sun rises”) where he discovered and practised astronomy.¹⁵⁰ Later accounts, such as the *Historia Scholastica*, add that Jonichus was blessed with cunning and wisdom.¹⁵¹ In most accounts of Jonichus, he had a relationship of some type with the biblical first King of Babylon, Nimrod.¹⁵² Accounts of their interactions characterise Jonichus as a mentor or tutor figure to Nimrod, who went to the East to learn from him. This tutor-pupil relationship may explain why the commentary of Canterbury MS 1 details a confused account of Nimrod and Jonichus’s relationship.

Jonichus’s only appearance on Canterbury MS 1 is in the first commentary (CRC001) on the Roll. Despite the text specifically stating that “Noah begat Jonichus after the Flood,” Jonichus does not appear on the genealogy at all. The commentary’s account of Jonichus goes on to state: “Truly the giant Nimrod, ten cubits tall, whom Jonichus son of Noah begat...” (*Nemroth gigas, decem cubitorum, quem Jonichus filius Noe genuit, quem etiam Jonitum Noe genuit post diluvium.*). There is much in this passage which bears discussion, but what is most intriguing for the purposes of this analysis is the commentary’s assertion that Nimrod is a son of Jonichus. Not only is this interesting because the genealogy presents Nimrod as a son of Cush (son of Ham), but there is little suggestion in the primary sources that Nimrod was a son of Jonichus. As far as I have been able to tell, the only primary source which outlines this father/son relationship is Pseudo-Methodius’s obscure source: *The Beginning of the World and End of Worlds*.¹⁵³ However, this is not the likely source for this commentary. Pseudo-Methodius’s account differs substantially from CRC001, omitting many of the details from the commentary such as the specific territorial division of the world

¹⁴⁸ Thomas Hill explores the idea that Jonichus’ existence in biblical exegesis acted as a precedent for Scaef’s presence, in: Hill, “The ark born son of Noe”, pp. 381-383.

¹⁴⁹ Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*, ed. and trans. Benjamin Garstad (Cambridge MA.: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 7-11.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ “The Historie of the Patriarks”, trans. Daly, p. 34.

¹⁵² Examples of this can be seen in: “The Historie of the Patriarks”, trans. Daly, pp. 34-35; Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*, trans. Garstad, pp. 7-11; Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 2, pp. 247-249.

¹⁵³ Pseudo-Methodius, “The Beginning of the World and the End of Worlds”, *Trevisa’s Dialogus inter Militem et Clericum, Fitz-Ralph’s Sermon: ‘Defensio Curatorum’, and Methodius: The Beginning of the World and the End of Worlds*, ed. Aaron Jenkins Perry, *Early English Text Society* no. 167 (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 98-99.

among Noah's descendants and Nimrod's height.¹⁵⁴ With this exception, the nature of their relationship in the chronicles is usually the mentor-disciple or tutor-pupil interaction discussed above. Furthermore, Canterbury MS 1 is not the only Roll which mentions this father-son relationship in its commentary.¹⁵⁵ This suggests that scribes copied from each other, and that the original Roll-maker was confused about Jonichus and Nimrod's relationship, a point emphasised by the contradictions between the genealogy and commentary on Canterbury MS 1. Another explanation for this confusion is the possibility of two Roll-makers; one who constructed the central line and one who wrote the commentary. This is not something which has yet been considered, but it may explain some of the contradictions present. Nevertheless, the representation of Jonichus on the Roll as another fourth son of Noah shows how these traditions could get confused over time.

Sceaf and Jonichus are both apocryphal fourth sons of Noah. Their emergence in exegeses both predate Canterbury MS 1 by some centuries, and the development of the lore surrounding their roles over the centuries is evidenced on the Roll. Sceaf, originally the successor to Woden as the divine ancestor of the recently Christianised Anglo-Saxons, was relegated to the place of a minor ancestor with a new name and no supporting commentary. Jonichus, on the other hand, not only retained his status as a son of Noah, but also gained a son in Nimrod. However, the Roll-maker's exact intentions regarding Jonichus are difficult to pinpoint, due to the contradicting narratives displayed between the genealogy and the commentary. What can be gained from examining the representation (or lack thereof) of Sceaf and Jonichus is an idea of the development of the roles played by these figures in biblical scholarship heading into late medieval England. The significant change and confusion regarding their roles shows development in the way English biblical scholars and historians viewed their past and in the way they constructed history. Just why scholars included biblical individuals and motifs in telling the origin of their people is the next point which is discussed.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 97-100.

¹⁵⁵ This father-son relationship is also in other rolls identified as part of the "Noah" group such as: Queen's College Oxford MS 167; Bodleian Rolls 10; Bodleian Add Marshall MS 135; BL MS Sloane MS 3732A; BL MS 18002.

The function of the Biblical material

Canterbury MS 1 is part of a wider group of medieval genealogical rolls known as the Noah group, named as such because they all begin with Noah. That these rolls all employ the same biblical material encourages one to explore what its practical function actually is. To achieve this, the purpose and popularity of origin myths in contemporary England will be analysed. This will involve a survey of the influence of *origines gentium* (origins of people myths) in medieval English scholarship, and an examination of the role origin myths played in society. This approach will then be applied to the biblical origin myth displayed on the Roll. This examination of the function of the biblical material will provide insight into the beliefs of medieval scholars at the time of Canterbury MS 1's construction. This section will offer the first explanation for why Noah was chosen to begin the genealogy of not just Canterbury MS 1, but also the Noah group as a whole.

The reasons for the necessity of *origines gentium* myths in medieval society lay in promoting and protecting not just the monarchy, but also the idea of a singular ethnic people. This idea is discussed by Reynolds, who argues: "myths of the common origin of a people served to increase or express its sense of solidarity."¹⁵⁶ This notion was especially important in the recently united England towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. In the early stages of the period of Anglo-Saxon dominance, England was split into seven distinct and autonomous kingdoms collectively known as the Heptarchy. Wessex gradually emerged as the dominant kingdom, eventually becoming known as the kingdom of the English. As England became a united entity, there was a need to promote the idea of an English people for the monarch to retain power over the people of his/her dominion. Origins of people myths acted as a way of promoting solidarity through shared ancestry and experience.¹⁵⁷ In the case of the Roll, this involved promoting the idea of an English people descended from Noah. The exact nature of England's *origines gentium* has taken several forms through various universal chronicles. However, since Canterbury MS 1 begins with Noah and his sons, this section will now discuss the reasons why Noah was chosen as the ancestor of the English and British kings.

Medieval Europe was a violent and turbulent environment, with warring and competing factions commonplace. The use of violence for political means was exerted by

¹⁵⁶ Reynolds, "*Origines Gentium*", p. 375.

¹⁵⁷ Rhys Jones, "Foundation legends, *origines gentium*, and senses of ethnic identity: legitimising ideologies in medieval Celtic Britain", *Environment and Planning* vol. 17 (1999), p. 693.

both the monarch and nobility, who often came into conflict with one another.¹⁵⁸ This conflict meant that the monarch's position was constantly under threat. As a remedy to this, royal genealogists concocted a way of clearly conveying the monarch's superior status through prestigious ancestry. This can be viewed in the pre-Christian idea of claiming descent from the divine pagan figure, Woden. This came from the traditional contemporary notion that the legitimacy of a king was based on descent from a god, who confers kingship.¹⁵⁹ Hill outlines that the reason for this lies in that fact that medieval England was a turbulent political environment susceptible to revolt. He adds: "if kingship were a matter of military superiority, then any ambitious magnate can aspire to it, and the consequences for both the reigning royal family and the social order as a whole are disastrous."¹⁶⁰ By outlining the direct descent from Noah and other important figures throughout the central tree, the Roll-maker sets the Lancastrian dynasty apart from possible opponents to the throne. This strengthens the Lancastrians' claim to rule the land, rooted in their foundation to the biblical past.

It was not uncommon for medieval genealogies to begin with Adam and Eve, Brutus (the traditional founder of Britain), or the Anglo-Saxon King, Egbert.¹⁶¹ The question remains, then, as to why the Roll-maker began the genealogy with Noah rather than another biblical or historical progenitor. Noah and his sons clearly played a significant role in ancestral myths of medieval England. Brian Murdoch goes in-depth on English and European medieval exegetical accounts of Noah and the Flood. He shows how every detail about the Flood myth from the Vulgate has been scrutinised and expanded on by dozens of medieval writers.¹⁶² But the importance of Noah is not limited to his role as a common ancestor of all peoples; according to Genesis, he also represents the purity and innocence of the post-diluvial world (Gen. 10:1-32). The sinfulness of the ante-diluvial world is well documented in Genesis: "the wickedness of the men was great in the earth and that all the thought of their heart was bent on evil at all times" (Gen. 6:5). It would make sense for sympathisers of the ruling house to be reluctant to claim ancestry back to this time, even if it is strictly implied by claiming descent from Noah. With that said, Adam rolls were still common in the reign of Henry V (d. 1422), Henry VI's predecessor, showing that the English monarchy clearly had

¹⁵⁸ Claire Valente, *The Theory and Practice of Revolt in Medieval England* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 1-3.

¹⁵⁹ Hill, "The myth of the ark born son of Noe", p. 381.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 380-381.

¹⁶¹ Margaret Lamont cites dozens of manuscripts which fit into these categories: Lamont, "'Genealogical' History", pp. 244-245.

¹⁶² Brian Murdoch, *The Medieval Popular Bible: Expansion of Genesis in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), pp. 96-126.

no issue with displaying their genealogy back to Adam and Eve. However, considering that Henry VI was a child (minority reign: 1422-1437) at the time when these Noah genealogies emerged, sympathetic genealogists may have wanted to avoid displaying a connection to the ante-diluvial world, choosing instead to associate more with the “second father of the human race”; the man whom God deemed the only worth saving, Noah.¹⁶³ Perhaps these genealogists saw Henry’s minority as a time of instability for the Lancastrians. They therefore promoted more of a relationship with the purity of Noah.¹⁶⁴ Nonetheless, his placement at the beginning of the genealogy of Canterbury MS 1 is likely a reflection of the political circumstances at the time of Henry VI’s minority, along with the associated connotations surrounding Adam and the ante-diluvial world from Genesis.¹⁶⁵

Discussions of *origines gentium* were common in medieval Europe and took many forms. Canterbury MS 1 itself presents several of these English and British origin legends. Noah, however, sits at the top of the genealogy, showing his role as the ultimate progenitor of the English and British kings. This section has offered the first explanation for why the Roll-maker decided to claim descent from Noah, rather than one of the other biblical patriarchs, as other rolls did. Employment of biblical ancestry set the king apart from the people and other nobles, ensuring that the royal house appeared legitimate to contemporaries. The rationale for using the Noah myth can be understood when considering the political environment from which the Noah group emerged, that is, from the minority of the young Henry VI. This chapter now moves to explore the sources used by the Roll-maker for constructing the biblical segment on Canterbury MS 1, shedding light on the methods used in the construction of the manuscript.

The sources for the Biblical material

The biblical material displayed on the Roll represents a confused and contradictory chronology. Inconsistent relationships and the employment of apocryphal figures creates a narrative which shows elements of multiple different sources and interpretations of Genesis. This section will take aspects from the components already discussed in this chapter and use

¹⁶³ For Noah as the second father of the human race see: Anlezark, “Sceaf, Japheth”, pp. 35-39.

¹⁶⁴ For more on Henry’s minority, see: Ralph A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1998), pp. 11-67; Bertram Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 52-112.

¹⁶⁵ The idea that universal histories were reflections of the political environment in which they were produced is discussed in more depth in: Allen, “Universal History 300-1000”, pp. 18-20.

them to attempt to uncover the sources used by the Roll-maker for the biblical material. This survey will first examine the genealogy before moving on to the commentaries. It will go on to suggest that Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, rather than the *Polychronicon* or the Vulgate, is the primary source for at least part of the first biblical commentary on Canterbury MS 1. After the likely sources have been analysed, a general discussion of what this tells us about the methods of the Roll-maker will take place, as well as what this means for our understanding of the types of sources in common use for biblical exegesis in medieval England. The instability of the Bible as a text in the Middle Ages, however, must first be acknowledged. The Bible which we know today is distinctly different from that of the Roll's period. Instead, it was a collection of books which took no one single canonical form.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, when the Vulgate Bible is referred to in this section, it is done so with the acknowledgement of the difficulty associated with addressing a singular Bible.

The genealogy of the biblical segment is small but contains points of interest in the way it is presented. Starting with the central tree, the first four generations correspond with those in St. Jerome's Vulgate Bible, the standard version contemporary with Canterbury MS 1.¹⁶⁷ These are (in chronological order): Noah, Japheth, Jenan (or Javan), and Cethis (Vulgate: Cetthim). From here, the genealogy lists other figures such as Cyprus and Cretus. These two are not mentioned in the Bible, yet their relationship from Cethis can be understood by looking at Genesis. Javan's sons went on to inhabit the areas surrounding the Mediterranean,¹⁶⁸ and Jerimiah 2:10 and Ezekiel 27:6 refer to the "Isle of Kethim" (Cetthis is a corruption of Kethim) in the Mediterranean, showing that it is plausible to see how the Roll-maker could make a connection from Cetthim to Cyprus and Crete. Bearing this in mind, the first four generations on the Roll link up with what is described in the Vulgate's Genesis (except for slight differences in the spelling of names), indicating that at least for the central tree, the Roll-maker remained true to the traditional genealogy. Regarding the rest of the genealogy, the three generations from Ham which are displayed also link up with the Vulgate; no sons of Nimrod are mentioned in Genesis, showing why Ham's line ends with Nimrod.¹⁶⁹ No generations are shown from Shem, most likely because Canterbury MS 1

¹⁶⁶ For more on the textual form of the Bible in the Middle Ages, see: Richard Gyug, "Early Medieval Bibles, Biblical Books, and the Monastic Liturgy in the Beneventan Region", *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, and Performance in Western Christianity*, ed. Susan Boynton and Diane J. Reilly (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), pp. 34-60.

¹⁶⁷ Francis van Liere, *The Introduction to The Medieval Bible* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 102.

¹⁶⁸ Adrian Curtis, *Oxford Bible Atlas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 48-49.

¹⁶⁹ Gen. 10:6-10.

makes no effort to display the genealogy of Abraham and Jesus, as other rolls did.¹⁷⁰ What is represented on the genealogy of the biblical segment indicates that the standard Vulgate Bible may be the source employed.

The Vulgate, however, does not appear to be the source for the commentaries. Before critically analysing the first commentary from the biblical segment, a description of the influence and circulation of Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica* will be given to add context to the discussion going forward. This is because it is possible that the *Historia Scholastica* was employed by the Roll-maker. Comestor (d. 1178) was a French theologian who authored the *Historia Scholastica*, one of the most popular books of the Middle Ages.¹⁷¹ The *Historia* was designed to be an educational guide on biblical history, becoming immensely popular in schools and universities, as well as being used by the clergy for studying scripture.¹⁷² Comestor employed a wide variety of sources, using texts from the popular church fathers, as well as drawing on readings from Jewish and pagan writers to complement his interpretation of recent biblical exegesis.¹⁷³ Comestor's work became part of the core curriculum at institutions in not only his native France, but also at Oxford University by the mid-thirteenth century.¹⁷⁴ The version of the *Historia* used for this study is the translated work: *The Historye of the Patriarks*.¹⁷⁵ The *Historye* was translated into middle-English from either a French or Latin version of the *Historia Scholastica* in the fifteenth century.¹⁷⁶ Although it is not a full edition of the *Historia Scholastica*, the extant manuscript's provenance is an example of the *Historia*'s influence in England. The manuscript enjoyed widespread use throughout the sixteenth century, until it was gifted to St. John's College Library by the fourth Earl of Southampton in the seventeenth century.¹⁷⁷ It is partially because of the influence the *Historia* enjoyed in England, coupled with the idiosyncrasies which can be reconciled between the Roll and the *Historia*, that this chapter argues that Comestor's work should be considered a possible source for CRC001.

The contents of the commentary tell a different and at times contradictory narrative to that presented on the genealogy. The first commentary, CRC001, is extensive and covers

¹⁷⁰ See: Ashmolean Rolls 27; Liverpool Mayer 12012; Queens College Oxford MS 168 Adam.

¹⁷¹ Beryl Smalley, *The Study of The Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), pp. 178-179.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Maria Sherwood-Smith, *Studies in the Reception of the "Historia Scholastica" of Peter Comestor* (Oxford: The Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 2000), pp. 2-3.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ "The Historye of the Patriarks", trans. Daly.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. xxxiii.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. xiv.

significant ground. As discussed in a previous section of this chapter, Noah's apocryphal fourth son, Jonichus, appears in this commentary. The Vulgate Bible makes no mention whatsoever of a Jonichus. He is, however, mentioned in Higden's *Polychronicon*, where he is said to be a son of Noah born after the Flood.¹⁷⁸ Jonichus is also in Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, where he appears in a narrative that resembles that of the *Polychronicon*.¹⁷⁹ Jonichus is also mentioned in Pseudo-Methodius's *Apocalypse* (seventh century), but due to the respective popularity of the more recent sources in England at the time, I do not consider it a likely direct source for the Roll-maker in constructing this commentary.¹⁸⁰ Indeed, the *Polychronicon* makes specific mention of Pseudo-Methodius as one of *its* sources.¹⁸¹ The discussion of Nimrod in this commentary can also give an indication of the source. CRC001 states: "Truly the giant Nimrod, ten cubits tall...". That Nimrod was a giant (*gigas*) is a specific detail found in few sources. Murdoch introduces a discussion on this, mentioning only that Nimrod is ten cubits tall in two chronicles: John Capgrave's fifteenth-century chronicle and a German chronicle. Murdoch does not, however, engage in any larger exploration of Nimrod's height in the primary sources.¹⁸² Nevertheless, this description of Nimrod is absent from the Vulgate, which instead characterises him as a mighty hunter, stating: "Now Cush begot Nimrod; he begun to be mighty on the earth. And he was a stout hunter before the Lord. Hence became the proverb: 'Even as Nimrod, the stout hunter before the Lord'" (Gen 10:8-10). The *Polychronicon* similarly does not mention Nimrod as a giant, instead, focusing on his role in building the Tower of Babel: "*cum terra esset labii esset unius, filii filiorum Noe, decente et docente eos Nemphrot [...] turrim altam ex cocto latere et bitumine colligato edificabant in campo Sennaar, ubi postmodum constructa est Babylonia.*"¹⁸³ Neither of these sources make specific mention of his physical stature. This detail is, however, found in the *Historia Scholastica*, which describes him as a "mighty giant."¹⁸⁴ Nimrod as a giant is also found in the Hebrew text, the *Septuagint* (but not the *Tanakh*), which characterises him as a "giant hunter."¹⁸⁵ Maria Sherwood-Smith notes that Comestor was influenced by Jewish tradition whilst writing his *Historia*, showing where he

¹⁷⁸ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 2, pp. 247-249.

¹⁷⁹ "The Historye of the Patriarks", trans. Daly, pp. 34-35.

¹⁸⁰ Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse*, trans. Garstad, pp. 7-11.

¹⁸¹ Churchill Babington, "Introduction", *Polychronicon* vol. 2, pp. xxiii – xxv.

¹⁸² Murdoch, *The Medieval Popular Bible*, p. 134.

¹⁸³ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 2, p. 249.

¹⁸⁴ "The Historye of the Patriarks", trans. Daly, p. 34.

¹⁸⁵ *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* Gen. 10:9, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 12.

gained these ideas from.¹⁸⁶ Other details in CRC001 also point to the *Historia Scholastica* as a possible source for this content. These include the specific mention of seventy-two generations from the three sons of Noah,¹⁸⁷ and the allocation of the three known continents between Ham, Japheth and Shem.¹⁸⁸ The *Historia Scholastica* is the only known source which mentions all of these elements, showing that this is the likely source for at least some of CRC001. This represents a considered use of sources by the Roll-maker in constructing this material, something which Jones also identified regarding John of Paris's *De potestate regia et papali*. He found that John's employment of both Vincent of Beauvais and Martin of Troppau shows an intentional narrative construction by the chronicler to argue against universal authority of the Emperor.¹⁸⁹ Canterbury MS 1 is another example of a medieval work which displays considered and intentional compilation.

Further commentary discusses the generations from Japheth which went on to inhabit Europe. The generations listed in CRC003 contain names which are not mentioned anywhere else on the Roll, listing seventeen generations from Japheth before discussing the races of Europe (such as the Saxons, Vandals, Goths, etc.) which these generations went on to father. Interestingly, this passage mentions another son of Japheth, Japha, who is not mentioned in the Vulgate, *Polychronicon*, or even the *Historia Scholastica*. These names are, however, found in Nennius's ninth-century *Historia Brittonum*.¹⁹⁰ The *Historia Brittonum* was certainly in circulation at this point in medieval England, being employed by Thomas Burton several decades earlier than the Roll-maker, and John Hardyng slightly later.¹⁹¹ The passage in Nennius lists many of the same people that CRC003 does, as well as the races which are descended from these people:

The first man who came to Europe was Alanus, of the Race of Japheth, with his three sons, whose names are Hessitio [Ysition], Armenon [Armenion], and Negue [Negno]. Hessitio had four sons, Francus, Romanus, Britto and Albanus; Armenon had five sons, Gothus, Walagothus, Gepidus, Burgundus, Langobardus; Negue had three sons, Vandalus, Saxo, Bavarus.[...] Alanus is said to have been son of Fetebir, son of Ougomun [Ogomyn], son of Thous [Thoy], son of Boib [Borb], son of Simeon [Semeon], son of Mair [Mair], son of Ethach, son of Aurthach [Arthaat], son of Ecthet [Cetheet], son of Oth [Corbii], son of Abir [Atrib], son of Rhea [Ra], son of Ezra [Esra], son of Izaru

¹⁸⁶ Sherwood-Smith, *Studies in the Reception of the "Historia Scholastica"*, pp. 4-6.

¹⁸⁷ "The Historye of the Patriarks", trans. Daly, p. 33.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. pp. 33-34.

¹⁸⁹ Chris Jones, "Historical Understanding and the Nature of Temporal Power in the Thought of John of Paris", *John of Paris: Beyond Royal & Papal Power*, ed. Chris Jones (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), pp. 77-118.

¹⁹⁰ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*.

¹⁹¹ Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in Medieval England II: c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1982), p. 283, 359.

[Esran], son of Baath [Baath], son of Iobaath [Japha], son of Javan [Jehan], son of Japheth, son of Noah...¹⁹²

Although there are slight differences between the genealogies in CRC003 and Nennius, this particular genealogy is absent in the other sources the Roll-maker used, indicating he either used a version of Nennius, or another unknown source which used Nennius. Recent studies have, however, dismissed the Roll-maker's use of Nennius. If he did indeed employ Nennius, it should be acknowledged that Wall initially identified the *Historia Brittonum* as one of the sources for Canterbury MS 1 in 1919.¹⁹³

The diverse range of sources which were employed for the biblical material alone can reveal much about the methods of the Roll-maker and the nature of biblical scholarship at the time of the Roll's construction. Three distinct sources have been identified in this discussion as potential primary sources for this material. The first, the Vulgate Bible, is what one would expect from a biblical account from medieval England. The logical representation of the generations from Noah and his sons on the genealogy corresponds with the narrative told in Genesis, suggesting that the Roll followed traditional scripture. Yet, the potential employment of the *Historia Scholastica* for CRC001 complicates this hypothesis. The Roll's employment of Comestor's work underlines not just the popularity of the text in medieval England, but also the types of sources the Roll-maker had access to. This point is further emphasised by his use of Nennius for CRC003, showing a range of sources used for displaying biblical content and individuals. The source base employed also tells us that medieval English scholars had an eclectic understanding of their own biblical origins. Rather than relying on what is said in the Vulgate, Comestor's work and the *Historia Brittonum*, neither of which remain true to the contents of the Vulgate, are viewed as reliable sources for conveying biblical history. The source base of the biblical material of Canterbury MS 1 furthers our understanding of the popularity of texts such as the *Historia Scholastica*, as well as showing what contemporary scholars believed about biblical theology and history in relation to their past.

¹⁹² Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 22. The names in square brackets from this passage contain the spelling of the corresponding name on the Roll.

¹⁹³ Wall, *Maude Roll*, np.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that the biblical segment of Canterbury MS 1 represents an arrangement of confusing and contradicting scriptural canon and apocryphal exegeses, systematically arranged by the Roll-maker to portray the biblical origins of the English kings. When broken down, it is possible to see the intentions and methodology of the Roll-maker. The genealogy, for example, has been arranged in a way which clearly reflects the narrative told in Genesis. Using Shirota's method of paralleling, the reasoning for the physical portrayal of Noah's sons on the genealogy also becomes clear; it is comparable to Brutus and his sons further down the Roll.¹⁹⁴ Looking at the commentary, a wide source base has clearly been employed, with the Roll-maker using the *Historia Scholastica*, demonstrating that text's popularity and influence at the time of the Roll's construction. The same can be said about his employment of Nennius for CRC003. The Roll-maker's use of these texts indicates that scholars did not just rely on the standard Vulgate Bible for their understanding of biblical history, giving an insight into the way contemporary scholars viewed their past and constructed their history. Analysing the apocryphal fourth sons of Noah from the Roll also provides this insight. The placement of the Germanic Scaef on Canterbury MS 1 shows how his role had changed in the centuries since his invention. He went from being the father of the Germanic and Anglo-Saxon people, to just another name on the German line. This is evidence of the construction of history evolving over time, showing that medieval English scholars' conception of their past was constantly developing.

This chapter has also uncovered the function of the biblical material, showing that the biblical origin myth was intended to set the English kings apart from the rest of the populace to secure their lineage, by showing that their ancestry lay in biblical foundations. This function is made even clearer by considering Canterbury MS 1's contemporary political situation at the time of its construction, in this case, the minority of Henry VI. This analysis of the biblical material on Canterbury MS 1 has shown that contemporary knowledge of biblical history was influenced not only by the Vulgate Bible, but also a collection of post-biblical interpretations and chronicles. This makes Canterbury MS 1 something of a melting-pot of medieval biblical exegeses. This melting-pot functions to create the biblical origin myth on the Roll. It is not, however, the only origin myth on Canterbury MS 1; the next

¹⁹⁴ Shirota, "Royal Depositions", pp. 52-61.

chapter explores how the pagan material on the Roll was also designed to represent the origins of the British and English people.

Chapter Three

Bridging the Gap: Pagan gods as men?

Introduction

The distinctive features on Canterbury MS 1 are not limited to the biblical segment. Slightly further down the genealogy are several figures whose existence on the Roll would seemingly undermine the biblical elements displayed just above. These include the pagan gods Jupiter and Saturn, who are shown as ancestors of the English kings. The accompanying commentary also describes elements which appear to contradict the biblical narrative. This chapter will examine these pagan elements, showing why they are on the Roll and how the Roll-maker attempted to justify their placement, especially considering the Christian society in which the Roll was produced. It begins by exploring the idea of “euhemerism” on the Roll. Euhemerism is the classical and medieval idea that the pagan gods are not deities, rather they were men/women who have been worshipped as gods by subsequent generations. I will suggest that euhemerism is utilised on Canterbury MS 1. Following this, it will be shown that the primary function of the post-biblical pagan segment is to reinforce the continuity of the central line between the biblical and Trojan origin myths, maintaining a strong unbroken genealogy. Through this analysis, as with the biblical, the sources used by the Roll-maker for this material will be considered, giving a glimpse into his methodology. An evaluation of the pagan material through the lens of the Renaissance will finally be provided. This will reveal the extent to which the Roll is a product of the Middle Ages.

Like the biblical segment, most of the pagan material is found towards the beginning of the Roll. It begins on the genealogy where the biblical segment ends, with Cethis’s (great-grandson of Noah) relationship with Cyprus. Cyprus is then connected to Cretus, followed by three pagan gods in a row: Celius, Saturn, and Jupiter. These gods are the subject of much of the analysis of this chapter, as their inclusion represents the most overt allusion to pagan deities on the Roll. The figures after Jupiter also have their roots in pagan mythology, these being Dardanus, Erictonius, and Trojus. The only other part of the genealogy which makes any notable use of a pagan deity is where the German line is transformed into the Heptarchy. This is where the Anglo-Saxon god, Woden, and his wife, Frealaff are represented. In terms of the relevant commentaries, the ones which are of interest to this chapter are the ones which mention the figures from the genealogy discussed above, primarily: CRC004, CRC005, CRC006, CRC008, and CRC065. Most of the analysis in this chapter focuses on the

genealogy spanning from Cethis to Brutus. Researching the representation of pagan figures will mean looking at different areas of the Roll and consulting different types of sources. Through this study, more will be revealed about the intentions of the Roll-maker, as well as the role that pagan deities and characters play on Canterbury MS 1.

Euhemerism: The gods as men

The obvious problem with the pagan material is that inherently mythical pagan figures are represented on the genealogy. How did the Roll-maker get around this? The Roll adopts a euhemeristic approach, that is, the supposed “gods” are represented as people rather than as divine figures. Before discussing how the Roll does this, the concept of euhemerism is first defined. I will survey its origins in the pre-Christian era, its use by the early Christian fathers and eventually medieval chroniclers. This section will then go on to show the prevalence of euhemerism in early medieval Christian literature, demonstrating how it developed into the Middle Ages. This allows for a novel evaluation of how euhemerism was used in scholarship contemporary to Canterbury MS 1 and how this technique was used on the Roll itself. By understanding this, the way pagan deities were thought of in a Christian society can be discerned, giving context to the Roll’s contemporary environment.

Euhemerism has its roots in a fourth/third century BC mythographer named Euhemerus of Messene.¹⁹⁵ Euhemerus posited in his *Sacred Inscription/History* (now lost) the idea that there are two groups of gods: Celestial and Earthly.¹⁹⁶ The Celestial gods are the heavenly bodies such as stars, the sun and the moon.¹⁹⁷ However, it is his conception of the latter group that is of more interest to this study. In short, the Earthly gods were the Olympian gods worshipped during his time. Euhemerus proposed the idea that the Earthly gods were actually real people who once lived and had been deified by subsequent generations due to their achievements.¹⁹⁸ To Euhemerus, they were “great men deified by later generations.”¹⁹⁹ This is not to be confused with apotheosis, the classical idea wherein heroes were deified and made into gods, such as Heracles in the *Odyssey*.²⁰⁰ Twentieth-century folklorist, Lewis

¹⁹⁵ Marek Winiarczyk, *The Sacred History of Euhemerus of Messene* (Berlin: De Gruyter inc, 2013), pp. 1-5.

¹⁹⁶ Nickolas P. Roubekas, *An Ancient Theory of Religion: Euhemerism from Antiquity to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2017), p. 19.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 19-22.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 23-27; Lauri Honko, “The Problem with Defining Myth”, *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* vol 6 (1972), pp. 11-12.

¹⁹⁹ Lewis Spence, *An Introduction to Mythology* (London: George G. Harrap and Company Ltd, 1921), p. 42.

²⁰⁰ Winiarczyk, *Euhemerus of Messene*, p. 29.

Spence, suggested that the euhemeristic approach saw myth as “history in disguise.”²⁰¹ Euhemerus’s work achieved impressive success, later being translated from Greek into Latin which put his ideas into circulation in Rome, where the euhemeristic approach saw Jupiter and Saturn become dead kings who once ruled in Latium.²⁰² His assessment of the gods was the subject of much debate in Antiquity, being discussed by figures such as Plutarch and Cicero, who condemned the idea as absurd.²⁰³ During this time when Greek and then Roman paganism was the dominant religious thought, Euhemerus was accused of being an atheist.²⁰⁴ After Christianity became the dominant religion in Europe from the fourth century AD, euhemerism became a useful tool in the argument against paganism.

Early Church Fathers and sympathisers seized upon the notion of euhemerism as a weapon against their pagan antagonists.²⁰⁵ As Jean Seznec explains, early Church writers and theologians including Eusebius, Isidore of Seville, Saint Augustine of Hippo, and Lactantius utilised euhemerism against their pagan contemporaries.²⁰⁶ Lactantius’s argument is perhaps the most substantial. He outlined in his early fourth-century work, *The Divine Institutes*, the man-made origins of the gods, and showed how Earthly gods such as Jupiter became euhemerised by subsequent generations.²⁰⁷ In his arguments, Lactantius carefully drew the distinction between these earthly gods being “deified” and “euhemerised,” reinforcing his conviction that these were men who became subsequently worshipped as deities. Early studies on euhemerism from Church Fathers such as these provided a base for later theologians such as Augustine of Hippo to build on. After addressing the beliefs surrounding many pagan gods, Augustine, in book 7 of his *City of God*, wrote: “A more believable account is rendered of these gods when it is said that they were men, and that sacred rites and solemn festivals were established for each one of them [...] by those who chose to worship them as gods.”²⁰⁸ This clearly shows a euhemeristic approach taken by Augustine in addressing the worship of pagan gods. Further evidence of his engagement with euhemerism

²⁰¹ Spence, *Introduction to Mythology*, p. 42.

²⁰² Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan gods: The Mythographical Tradition and its place in Renaissance Humanism and Art* (New York: Bollingen Foundation Inc, 1953), p. 12.

²⁰³ John Daniel Cooke, “Euhemerism: A Mediaeval Interpretation of Classical Paganism”, *Speculum* vol. 2, no. 4 (1927), p. 397; Roubekas, *An Ancient Theory of Religion*, pp. 51-67, 77-84.

²⁰⁴ For the debate surrounding Euhemerus’s possible atheism, see: Roubekas, *An Ancient Theory of Religion*, pp. 73-92.

²⁰⁵ Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan gods*, p. 12.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

²⁰⁷ Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, trans. Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), pp. 115-117.

²⁰⁸ Augustine of Hippo, *City of God* book VII, ed. and trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 289.

is found in his 390 letter to a pagan, Maximus the Grammarian, where Augustine interpreted Virgil to show that Jupiter and Saturn were once men.²⁰⁹ Isidore of Seville continued this tradition in his *Etymologies*, specifically stating that “Those who the pagans assert are gods are revealed to have once been human.”²¹⁰ He then went on to describe specific deities and the cultures which euhemerised them. The employment of euhemerism by these early Christian writers shows how the concept developed over time and became used against its pagan source.

Later in the Middle Ages, euhemerism became a technique popularly used by chroniclers; there are several notable examples of chronicles which include euhemerised gods. Most important to this study are the examples out of England, including Ranulph Higden’s *Polychronicon* and Henry of Huntingdon’s *Historia Anglorum*, both of which discuss Jupiter and Saturn as former kings in Crete and Italy.²¹¹ These instances show that work that employed euhemerism existed in England shortly before Canterbury MS 1 was written. Furthermore, there is also evidence that the theory of euhemerism had been a topic of philosophical discourse in medieval England. Roger Bacon, a thirteenth-century English Franciscan philosopher discussed the topic in his seminal, *Opus Majus*.²¹² As well as discussing science, mathematics, alchemy, and other topics, Bacon engaged with the euhemeristic debate from the early Christian theologians mentioned above. He described the human origins of pagan gods such as Io, Isis, Apollo, Minerva, and Prometheus, among others.²¹³ This is significant because it not only shows that the theory of euhemerism was employed by English chroniclers, but it was also discussed by a major philosopher in England not long before the Roll was constructed. Bacon, though his reputation somewhat diminished during the Renaissance, was one of the preeminent scholars of his time. That he engaged with euhemerism in the *Opus Majus* shows that the idea was known and accepted by one of medieval England’s greatest contemporary minds.²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ Augustine in his letter to Maximus: “If you are satisfied with Virgil’s authority, as you indicate you are, then you will certainly be satisfied with these lines too: ‘From high Olympus first came Saturn down, Fleeing Jove’s arms, an exile from his realm,’ and so on. By these lines the poet wants to show that Saturn and such-like gods of yours were once men...”; St. Augustine, *Select Letters*, ed. E. Capps, T.E Page, and W.H.D Rouse, trans. James Houston Baxter (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1930), pp. 27-29.

²¹⁰ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, ed and trans. Stephen A. Barney et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 184.

²¹¹ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 2, pp. 341-347; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, pp. 509-511.

²¹² Cooke, “Euhemerism”, p. 407.

²¹³ Roger Bacon, *Opus Majus*, trans. Robert Belle Burke (New York: Russell & Russell Inc., 1962), pp. 54-55.

²¹⁴ For Bacon’s contemporary and posthumous reputation: Amanda Power, “A Mirror for Every Age: The Reputation of Roger Bacon”, *The English Historical Review* vol. 121, no. 492 (2006), pp. 657-692.

The most overt of reference to euhemerism on the Roll regards Woden, who is positioned at the end of the German line. Woden, as was discussed in the previous chapter, was seen as a god by the Anglo-Saxons before they became Christianised. This is acknowledged by the Roll-maker in CRC065: “The Saxon people, believing him [Woden] to be a god because of the multiplication of his race, consecrated to him the fourth day in the week, which is Wednesday, and the sixth day to his wife, Frealaff, which is Friday, in perpetual sacrilege.” This commentary clearly states that Woden was once thought of as a god, but was in fact just a man who was wrongly worshipped. This is the clearest example of euhemerism on the Roll, but it is not the only instance. We can also assume that Jupiter, Saturn, and Celiuss are euhemerised; although this is not explicit, they are also not stated anywhere to be deities. Because of the common use of euhemerism in medieval primary sources, it is very likely employed on Canterbury MS 1. This discussion shows that the pagan gods were not completely rejected in this Christian environment, but were instead integrated into it.

The primary sources for the Pagan material

The previous chapters demonstrated the value of locating the sources the Roll-maker employed for the early parts of Canterbury MS 1. Although mainly localised in a small segment of the Roll, the pagan material is a scattered mess of Greek, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and biblical mythology, making narrowing down the sources a difficult task. However, this section will attempt just that. In order to accurately assess the likely sources for the pagan material, the segment spanning from Cyprus to Brutus will be broken down. This means that not only will the genealogy and commentary be examined separately, but in some cases, individuals will need to be examined in isolation. This section will work its way down the genealogy, beginning with Cyprus and ending with Brutus, before analysing two commentaries to demonstrate that the Roll-maker had access to an array of sources, some of which remain unknown. Like the previous chapter, this exercise will shed light on current understandings of the Roll-maker’s methodology, as well as how certain sources were used in fifteenth-century England.

Cyprus’s place on the genealogy as a “son” of Cethis is a result of biblical (Genesis 10:4) and exegetical accounts of Cethis which state that his descendants went on to inhabit Cyprus. This suggests, like in the biblical segment just above it, that Cyprus’s place on the

Roll was potentially derived from the Vulgate Bible or any other standard exegetical account. Because of this, it is fair to think of Cyprus as an extension of the biblical genealogy; a bridge between the biblical and pagan segments. Following Cyprus, the genealogy breaks away from the biblical narrative by showing Cretus, who is probably referring to Cres, the mythical king of Crete. This can be gathered by looking at the *Polychronicon*, which is the only available English chronicle in which I have been able to locate Cres, and provides a very brief account of his history as the eponymous first king of Crete.²¹⁵ The other English chronicles used to compile the Roll make no mention of Cres, meaning the Roll-maker possibly got his idea for him from the *Polychronicon*. However, Higden does not detail Cres's descent nor any supposed relationship to Cyprus or Celius; he is simply inconsequentially dropped into the narrative as the first king of Crete. This suggests that rather than the *Polychronicon*, an unknown source was likely the basis for Cres's place on the Roll, particularly considering the unusual line of descent from Cethis. The same can be said for Celius, who is not mentioned anywhere in the *Polychronicon*, indicating his origins likely lay in the same source as Cres's.

From Saturn, the genealogy is much more straight forward. It is well established that Saturn is the father of Jupiter, a fact stated in the *Polychronicon*, which euhemerises the two Roman deities as quarrelling rulers of Crete and Italy.²¹⁶ The influence of the *Polychronicon*, coupled with the fact that we know the Roll-maker used Higden (cited in CRC121), suggests that it was the source for the Saturn-Jupiter relationship.²¹⁷ Following Jupiter, the ten names up to Brutus are all from the same authority. Multiple sources lay out this genealogy, although the most likely is Nennius's *Historia Brittonum*, which provides a list of the exact same generations as Canterbury MS 1, stating: "Brutus, the son of Silvius, son of Ascanius, son of Aeneas, son of Anchises, son of Capis, son of Asaracus, son of Tros, son of Erectonius, son of Dardanus, son of Jupiter...".²¹⁸ Nennius is the likely source for several reasons. Firstly, the other sources which list these exact generations are much older, such as Diodorus (first century BC) and Virgil (first century BC); thus, they were not likely used by - or even available to - the Roll-maker. No other English sources list these generations. The second reason is that we know that the Roll-maker, as I established in chapter two, used Nennius for this area of the Roll, specifically CRC003. Therefore, we can see that the Roll-

²¹⁵ Higden, *Polychronicon*, p. 295.

²¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 343-345.

²¹⁷ For more on the influence of the *Polychronicon* in contemporary England, see: Gransden, *Historical Writing II*, pp. 56-57.

²¹⁸ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 19.

maker used a variety of sources for the genealogy, showing that he undertook a vast amount of research in order to construct it. How, then, were the commentaries constructed?

CRC004 is the first commentary in this segment. It states that Cyprus reigned on the island of Cyprus and from him Cretus was born, who then went on to reign in Crete, after whom the island was named. This is an interesting case because the commentary personifies Cyprus, despite the likely geographic reasons for his inclusion on the genealogy. The lack of evidence in the primary sources for a ruler named Cyprus suggests that this part was either fabricated by the Roll-maker or, more likely, copied from another genealogy. Nevertheless, there is a likely source for the commentary (CRC004) on Cretus; the Roll's account is similar to the *Polychronicon*, which contains the same information about Cres as in CRC004.²¹⁹ The Latin of the *Polychronicon* reads: "*Cres coepit regnare in Creta, a quo et Creta insula dicta est...*",²²⁰ compared to CRC004: "*A quo Cipro Cretus genitus est, de cuius nomine Creta insula nominata est...*". As noted above, Cyprus is absent from Higden's account, meaning it is unlikely that this is the direct source. There are two possibilities to explain the construction of this commentary. Either there are two different sources for the same commentary, one of which being the *Polychronicon*, or, if Cyprus and Cres are from the same primary source, the Roll-maker accessed sources which are now unavailable. This would further indicate that the Roll-maker utilised a varied array of sources. This point is also evidenced by CRC005 which describes Jupiter's role as a father of Mercury and Dardanus. The source for this passage is once again unclear. There are bits and pieces from the *Polychronicon*, such as the account which tells us that Jupiter, by Maia, the daughter of Atlas, begot Mercury.²²¹ What is absent from this source, however, is the detail of Dardanus as the son of Electra by Jupiter. This is not found anywhere in the *Polychronicon*. What must be concluded, therefore, is that the Roll-maker had access to sources which have not been previously considered. From analysing these two commentaries (CRC004 and CRC005), it can be shown that the Roll-maker consulted sources other than the chronicles which it was thought he was limited to.

There are other possible sources which the Roll-maker may have used. It is possible that he simply copied from previous genealogies, such as the Adam rolls produced during the reign of Henry V. Another option is that the Roll-maker had access to some form of Virgil's *Aeneid* or a similar account of the Trojan war. Electra, who is not mentioned in any English

²¹⁹ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 2, p. 294.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid., p. 337.

chronicles thought to be a source of the Roll, is mentioned in the *Aeneid* as a daughter of Atlas.²²² Furthermore, we know that Virgil was available in medieval England, because he influenced chroniclers such as Geoffrey of Monmouth and Nicholas Trevet (d. c.1328).²²³ It is also possible the Roll-maker was influenced by Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*, also one of the main sources used by Higden. Isidore discussed many of the people mentioned on the Roll, including Celius as the father of Saturn, who is scarcely mentioned in other medieval sources.²²⁴ The Roll-maker clearly went deeper with his research than was initially believed, going further back than the compilation chronicles, looking at original sources. The Roll-maker's use of sources indicates he possessed clear intentions in the narrative he wanted to portray. In this case, the strong uninterrupted genealogy embodied in the pagan segment suggests that he worked to create a continuous central line, something which is key to the roll format.

The image of continuity

The linear nature of the genealogical roll format ensures that continuity of the British/English monarchy is stressed. This feature is identified by Shiota, who argues that continuity is one of the key reasons for its employment.²²⁵ Continuity can be represented by the lack of any obvious breaks in the genealogy where the sources would suggest there be a change in ruling dynasty. An example of this is seen in the lack of attention given by the Lancastrian scribe to the deposition of Richard II in 1399.²²⁶ This idea of continuity is key to understanding the purpose of much of the pagan material on the Roll. This analysis will first describe the individuals who fall into this segment, before showing why the Roll-maker felt it necessary to include these pagan figures on the genealogy. It will argue that this segment of the Roll is simply a way to transition seamlessly from the biblical segment to the Brutus myth. The image of continuity exhibited in this segment is seen throughout the Roll, reinforcing the image of a strong and consistent English monarchy.

Cethis, as is discussed in the previous chapter, is the son of Javan, who is a grandson of Noah. It is from Cethis that Cyprus is descended, followed by Cretus. From Cretus are

²²² Virgil, *Aeneid* book VIII, pp. 69-71.

²²³ Gransden, *Historical Writing: c.550-1307*, pp. 204-205, 503.

²²⁴ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, p. 185.

²²⁵ Shiota, "Unrolling History", p. 30.

²²⁶ The deposition of Richard II on Canterbury MS 1 is discussed at length in: Shiota, "Unrolling History", pp. 79-87.

descended more familiar figures from mythology, such as Celius, Saturn, and Jupiter. Following them are other well-known characters, these being: (in order) Dardanus (CRN098), Erictonius (CRN099), Trojus (CRN100), Assaracus (CRN105), Capis (CRN106), Anchises (CRN107), Aeneas (CRN108), Ascanius (CRN113), Silvius (CRN114), and Brutus (CRN115). The three figures of Cethis, Cyprus, and Cretus are used as a bridge between the biblical and the pagan, allowing for the genealogy to transition to the Trojan Brutus myth.

Although Cethis is primarily a biblical figure, he is also key to understanding the development of the genealogy from the biblical to the pagan. His bizarre relationship with Cyprus marks a turning point in the narrative on the Roll. It is first worth acknowledging that the Roll's genealogy is unquestionably referring to a person, and not to the island of Cyprus. This is clear because the corresponding commentary states that Cyprus (*Ciprus*) reigned in the isle of Cyprus (CRC004): *Iste Ciprus in linea regia in insula Cipre primus regnavit*. Although there is no obvious indication in the medieval primary sources of who "Cyprus" could be referring to, a logical connection can be viewed between these two figures via the Vulgate. In Genesis 10:2-5, the generations from Japheth are listed, going no further than his grandchildren, among whom is Cethis. Genesis 10:4 states that the descendants of Cethis's father, Javan, went on to inhabit the lands of the Gentiles, meaning Europe. Isidore stated that Javan's descendants dwelt in Ionia and Greece.²²⁷ The four sons of Javan dwelt in the surrounding islands, with Cethis's descendants inhabiting Cyprus. Josephus is one of the key early sources make this connection: "Chethimos [Cethis] held the island of Chethima – and this is now called Cyprus – and from it all islands and most of the lands along the sea are called Chethim by the Hebrews."²²⁸ In addition, other translations and versions of biblical texts such as the later King James Bible (Genesis 10:4), and the modern English translation of the Hebrew Torah (Genesis 10:4), use the alternative name "Kittim" for Cethis. Kittim is homonymous with a region of classical Cyprus, a name used for the Mediterranean islands in general, and the island of Cyprus itself in exegeses.²²⁹ This connection between Cethis and Cyprus, however, is most evident in the Latin of the *Polychronicon*: "*Cyprus insula, quæ et*

²²⁷ This is specifically stated in: Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, p. 193.

²²⁸ Ibid.; *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* vol. 3, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley et al (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), p. 45; Josephus, *Judean Antiquities* book 1, p. 46.

²²⁹ For Kittim as the name of the Mediterranean islands, see: Jeremiah 2:10. For Kittim as an alternate name for Cyprus: John Rogerson, *The New Atlas of the Bible* (London: MacDonald, 1985), p. 214; *Oxford Bible Atlas*, ed. Herbert May (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 55.

Paphos sive Cethim...”.²³⁰ The middle-English translation of the Polychronicon supports this reading, stating that Cyprus was otherwise called “Cethim.”²³¹ This is how contemporaries would have understood the Latin. The connection between Cethis and Cyprus in medieval literature reveals the Roll-maker’s logic, showing why Cyprus is included on the genealogy and is directly connected to Cethis. The relationship between Cethis and Cyprus marks a major turning point in the narrative on the Roll, signalling a transition from a biblical narrative to one which features figures from pagan mythology.

Following down the line, another strange relationship is shown, this being from Cyprus to Cretus. This is another bizarre connection which has no foundation in any of the Roll-maker’s primary sources. However, Canterbury MS 1 is not the only Roll which makes this connection. Anthony Faulkes, in his study of Icelandic manuscripts, identified this relationship on medieval Icelandic genealogies and thirteenth-century Welsh genealogies.²³² Faulkes points out that this indicates this connection must be from a medieval primary source which has not yet been discovered.²³³ Nevertheless, the previous sections showed that Cretus is referring to Cres, the mythical first king of Crete. This transition from Cyprus to Cretus/Cres provides a platform to display pagan deities on the genealogy, due to Crete’s significance in Greek and Roman mythology.

The euhemerised gods, (in order) Celius, Saturn, and Jupiter, follow Cretus. The relationship between Cretus and Celius is another strange one, as most chroniclers are silent on any children of Cres, as well as Celius himself. Godfrey of Viterbo in his *Pantheon*, is one of the only chroniclers to make this connection, stating that Celius is the son of Cres.²³⁴ This shows that the father-son relationship between Cres and Celius existed in other medieval sources. However, the rest of this genealogy in the *Pantheon* is different to Canterbury MS 1, as Cres is shown as a son of Nimrod rather than being connected to Cyprus, indicating that Godfrey is almost certainly not the source of the genealogy. Furthermore, most sources which subsequently used Godfrey’s Chronicle as a source were primarily in Germany and

²³⁰ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 1, p. 308. Full sentence: “Cyprus insula, quæ et Paphos sive Cethim, ab austro cingitur Phœnicis pelago, ab occidente mari Pamphylico, a circio Ciliciam habet, continet centum octoginta millia in longum, sed centum viginti quinque in latum.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Anthony Faulkes, “Descent from the Gods”, *Mediaeval Scandinavia* vol. 11 (1978), pp. 104-105.

²³³ Ibid., p. 105.

²³⁴ Godfrey of Viterbo, *Pantheon* in *MGH Scriptores* vol. 22, trans. Georg Heinrich Pertz (Stuttgart: 1872), pp. 300-301. See also: Thomas Foerster, “Introduction”, *Godfrey of Viterbo and his Readers: Imperial Tradition and Universal History in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Thomas Foerster (Ashgate, 2015), pp. 1-12.

Italy, not England, or they focus on completely different time-periods.²³⁵ It is plausible that our Roll-maker simply copied from another genealogy such as the thirteenth-century Welsh pieces discussed by Faulkes. Nevertheless, after Jupiter (CRN097), the genealogy continues its mission, presenting a continuous and unbroken line based on already established mythology to Brutus (CRN115). After Jupiter, the central line to Brutus contains ten individuals, all of whom appear in Greek or Roman mythology as ancient kings or children of gods. This line of descent, unlike the names before them, is accurate according to mythology. The individuals listed are as follows: (in order) Dardanus, Erictonius, Trojus, Assaracus, Capis, Anchises, Aeneas, Ascanius, Silvius, Brutus. This is an accurate father-son lineage according to classical sources such as Virgil's *Aeneid*,²³⁶ and Diodorus Siculus's (first century BC) *Bibliotheca Historica*,²³⁷ as well as Nennius's *Historia Brittonum* from medieval England, which specifically outlines these generations.²³⁸ The previous section established that the Roll-maker probably used Nennius for this segment of the genealogy. It is interesting to note that Henry of Huntingdon also presents his own version of this Trojan genealogy, but his is slightly different. It excludes several figures such as Assaracus and Capis.²³⁹ Although we know that the Roll-maker employed Henry of Huntingdon for part of the Roll, he clearly did not consult him for this segment. This gives us a glimpse at his methodology, as he seems to have devoted different sources to different parts of the Roll.

The genealogy from Cyprus, or even Cethis, to Brutus may appear complicated and convoluted, but it demonstrates a very clear thought process by the Roll-maker. The image of continuity which is conveyed by the unbroken line is central to the Roll-maker's objective. Shirota states: "The [Canterbury] roll visually communicates to its audience that the continuity of 'royal dynasty' is central to the existence of the English Kingdom."²⁴⁰ The importance of continuity on Canterbury MS 1, identified by Shirota, is key to understanding why these pagan figures are present on the Roll. The unbroken central line which runs through these relationships reinforces this image of continuity, despite the dubious

²³⁵ Simon Fenkele, "Gottfried of Viterbo", *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* vol. 1, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 722-724.

²³⁶ Virgil, *Aeneid* book I-VII.

²³⁷ Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* vol. 2, trans. Charles Oldfather et al. (Harvard University Press, 1933-1967), pp. 55-56.

²³⁸ Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 19.

²³⁹ Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, p. 25.

²⁴⁰ Shirota, "Unrolling History", p. 33.

relationships between Cethis and Cyprus, as well as Cyprus and Cretus. The continuous and consistent lineage removes questions of stability and legitimacy from Noah to Brutus.

There are two origin stories presented on Canterbury MS 1. The first is of a biblical nature, and the second is the Trojan Brutus myth of the founding of Britain. Connecting these two myths together is the function of the Cethis to Brutus segment of the genealogy. In order to correctly display the ancestry of Brutus, pagan figures such as the ones mentioned above had to be utilised. This forms somewhat of a pagan bridge, bridging the gap between the two origin myths. The pagan segment is used by the Roll-maker as a way to get from the biblical origin myth to the Brutus origin myth, whilst maintaining a continuous unbroken genealogy. The use of these classical pagan elements, and possibly even classical sources, makes for an interesting case-study of whether glimpses of the Renaissance are present on the Roll, particularly in the fifteenth century when the Italian Renaissance was taking off.

Glimpses of the Renaissance?

Canterbury MS 1's construction took place during a time of great cultural change in Europe. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Italian Renaissance was emerging and spreading throughout Europe, bringing about a new interest in classical writings and pagan deities. Literary works from this era such as Boccaccio's fourteenth-century *Decameron* were widely circulated throughout Europe, including England, where it influenced writers such as Geoffrey Chaucer.²⁴¹ The growth and influence of the Renaissance in Italy at this time prompts one to ask whether Canterbury MS 1, which was written in the early to mid-fifteenth century, contains features which indicates any Renaissance influences, especially with regard to the way that pagan figures are represented on the Roll. This section will explore this idea, first examining how pagan figures were treated during the Middle Ages, before discussing how this changed in the Renaissance. This will show whether Canterbury MS 1 contains any Renaissance influences through its portrayal of traditionally pagan figures. Wider English contemporary beliefs surrounding these figures and myths such as those represented on the Roll will therefore be explored. It will be argued that the pagan

²⁴¹ Leonard Michael Koff, "Introduction", *The Decameron and the Canterbury Tales: New Essays on an Old Question*, ed. Leonard Michael Koff and Brenda Deen Schildgen (London: Associated University Press, 2000), p. 11.

imagery on Canterbury MS 1 is consistent with medieval, not Renaissance, representations of these figures.

Medieval England was a predominantly Christian society; the Church was intertwined with many facets of society, including the monarchy, which attained most of its authority and legitimacy from the Church.²⁴² Despite this, aspects of paganism, including the gods, still existed in medieval culture. Seznec, in his work on the survival of pagan deities into the Renaissance, argues: “Even the gods were not *restored* to life [in the Renaissance], for they had never disappeared from the memory or imagination of man [during the Middle Ages].”²⁴³ Art produced in medieval Europe depicted events and people from classical mythology, including the Olympian gods and scenes from Virgil.²⁴⁴ However, in instances of pagan deities or kings portrayed in medieval art, they were represented as reflections of the cultural settings in which they were produced. For example, Erwin Panofsky notes an image of Saturn from a manuscript dating to c.1100 in which the god is represented as a saint and is dressed in saintly attire.²⁴⁵ Furthermore, pagan gods and myths appear frequently in medieval literature such as chronicles and philosophical works. There is abundant evidence that pagan deities and myths remained in some form in Europe during the Middle Ages.

The Italian Renaissance emerged out of the Italian city-states during the fourteenth century, before Canterbury MS 1 was constructed. The period saw what has been termed a revival of interest in classical pagan figures. The new interest in a pagan aesthetic is seen most overtly in art from this period. Unlike during the Middle Ages, Renaissance sculptures and images of pagan deities were formed in a way which reflected the pagan gods’ classical environment; the sculptors imitated classical artists to make their work appear as though from Antiquity.²⁴⁶ However, what is more of interest to this study is the representation of paganism in literature. During the Renaissance, writers and playwrights dramatized stories from pagan literature, including gods and imagery. In the English case, William Shakespeare is the most famous example, with works such as the poem *Venus and Adonis* (1592-93), and the play

²⁴² G. W. Bernard, *The Late Medieval English Church: Vitality and Vulnerability Before the Break with Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 19.

²⁴³ Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan gods*, p. 3.

²⁴⁴ Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, “Classical Mythology in Mediaeval Art”, *Metropolitan Museum Studies* vol. 4, no. 2 (1933), pp. 251-253.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 253-254.

²⁴⁶ Luba Freedman, *The Revival of the Olympian gods in Renaissance Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 132.

Cymbeline (1611), which employed pagan imagery to popular acclaim.²⁴⁷ This narrative adoption of classical pagan figures is a key characteristic of Renaissance literature, playing more of a literary or artistic role than a religious one. Joscelyn Godwin articulated how this interest in pagan imagery operated, suggesting: “that some people during this period ‘dreamed’ of being pagans.”²⁴⁸ Godwin then described the normalcy of the likenesses of gods such as Apollo and Mars displayed in local festivals in fifteenth-century Italy.²⁴⁹ The cultural embrace of the classical was a key aspect of the Renaissance, and should be considered when applying its features to Canterbury MS 1.

The pagan deities survived consistently in both medieval and Renaissance literature. What is not consistent, however, is the way in which they were represented. Looking at Canterbury MS 1, the euhemerised nature of the gods displayed on the genealogy is consistent with the description of these same gods in medieval chronicles. As a part of this, no real divinity is attributed to them; they are simply shown as dead kings. The only exception to this is found in CRC014, which tells of when Brutus prayed to the goddess Diana and received a prophetic response which set him on his journey to Britain. This passage is taken directly from Geoffrey’s *HRB*, which also makes mention of Jupiter and Mercury, to whom Brutus and his associates make sacrifices.²⁵⁰ Yet, this should not be viewed as an example of a Renaissance narrative. Geoffrey was writing about a time before Christianity, one which he acknowledged multiple times as being dominated by pagans. Brutus is said by Geoffrey to have existed not long after the Trojan war, meaning that it makes sense that he was a pagan and would sacrifice to the pagan gods. However, Marion Gibson argues that the legitimacy of the gods is undermined in Geoffrey’s work through false prophesy, suggesting that he worked to restrict the divinity of the pagan gods.²⁵¹ Canterbury MS 1 simply copies this myth directly from Geoffrey and gives it no explanation, indicating that there was little thought by the Roll-maker about how the goddess would be represented. This is odd, considering the present study up to here has argued the Roll-maker carefully considered his use of sources. It may, however, reflect the Roll-maker’s attitude towards Geoffrey’s authority and the wider Brutus myth. Although chapter one demonstrated that the Roll-maker edited Geoffrey’s account of the Romans, this appears to be the only aspect of the

²⁴⁷ For more on English literature with classical pagan themes, see: Marion Gibson, *Imagining the pagan past: gods and goddesses in literature and history since the Dark Ages* (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 39-39.

²⁴⁸ Joscelyn Godwin, *The Pagan Dream of the Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 2002), p. 2.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

²⁵⁰ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, pp. 51-52.

²⁵¹ Gibson, *Imagining the Pagan Past*, p. 14.

HRB he appropriated, suggesting he did not approach the rest of the *HRB* with as much of an agenda. From a literary standpoint, the representation of the pagan gods on the Roll is consistent with how these figures were portrayed during the Middle Ages.

As an historiographic analysis of the Roll, there is something to be said about the way history is written on it and the types of sources the Roll-maker used. Geoffrey of Monmouth, Nennius, and the *Polychronicon* are all medieval chronicles which reflect a medieval perspective on history. The use of origin myths, particularly the Trojan origin myth from Aeneas to Brutus, is a typically medieval motif. Sjoerd Levelt states: “The new or increased accessibility of the writing of classical authors of history and ethnography such as Tacitus and Pliny helped to refute and replace Trojan origin myths by providing new information about the origin and settlement histories of the European peoples...”.²⁵² Yet, Canterbury MS 1 relies on a Trojan myth to represent the founding of Britain. The construction of history on the Roll, which is a central focus of this paper, is distinctly medieval; it employs both medieval sources and medieval motifs.

The other aspect of the Roll which makes it a product of the Middle Ages concerns the visual portrayal of pagan gods. Canterbury MS 1 does not contain any extensive illumination. Compared to other medieval genealogical rolls, many of which display illustrations of kings and the royal family, the Roll has a very simple design without any images or extensive marginalia. What the Roll-maker has done, however, is decorate the roundels of important kings. The roundels of kings such as Brutus (CRN115), Lucius (CRN262), Egbert (CRN392), and William the Conqueror (CRN435) all feature some form of decoration to distinguish their importance compared to others on the genealogy. Whether it be with a large rose or a crown, the reader’s eye is drawn to the decorated roundel to tell them that that figure played an important part in the lineage of English kings. The roundels of Celius, Saturn, and Jupiter are not decorated in any way, nor are the roundels of other key pagan rulers or heroes such as Erictonius or Aeneas. Furthermore, neither they, nor any other figure leading up to Brutus, are given Roman or Arabic Numerals, most likely because they were not rulers of Britain.²⁵³ If Canterbury MS 1 was a product of the Renaissance, one would imagine that there would be decoration of some description to celebrate and signify their presence in the lineage of English kings. This is especially true considering the

²⁵² Sjoerd Levelt, “Renaissance Historiography”, *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* vol 2, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), p. 1270.

²⁵³ For more on the Roman Numeral Scribe and his selective editing: Parker, “A Women’s Role”, pp. 109-114.

expansion in artistic representations of classical pagan deities during the Renaissance. Therefore, due to both the literary and artistic representation (or lack thereof) of the pagan figures on the Roll, Canterbury MS 1 is very much a product of the Middle Ages, reflecting medieval beliefs surrounding pagan deities.

Conclusion

There are two origin myths on the central tree. The first is the biblical, while the second is the Trojan origin myth from the *HRB*. The pagan segment, though appearing troublesome, is fundamental to the Roll-maker's end goal of establishing a continuous lineage whilst retaining both origin myths. This indicates a clear thought process and knowledge of his sources. The segment between Cyprus and Brutus is a key bridge on the Roll's genealogy, reinforcing continuity between the biblical origin myth and the Trojan origin myth. This emphasises not only the importance of both these myths, but also the significance of continuity in the lineage of the British and English kings.

The sources of the Roll-maker have also been explored, showing that he went deeper than was previously thought. By using Nennius's *Historia Brittonum* as well as other primary sources, credit should be given to the Roll-maker for the level of research he undertook, using primary sources rather than just the compilation chronicles. This chapter has also demonstrated that by examining how the pagan deities on the Roll are presented, it can be concluded that Canterbury MS 1 is very much a medieval, not Renaissance, inspired document, despite the overt use of pagan figures.

One of the key outcomes of this chapter is the new knowledge that the Roll-maker employed a greater number and variety of sources than was initially thought. By understanding this, we can get a better sense of the types of sources which were available to this individual, as well as those which were employed for each part of the Roll. This is especially emphasised by his employment of Nennius, rather than Henry of Huntingdon, for the Jupiter to Brutus genealogy. This suggests the Roll-maker gave careful consideration to how he constructed history and that there is a logic to how he laid out the genealogy. This has refined current knowledge on the Roll-maker's use of sources, much as the previous chapter did regarding the biblical material. Though appearing convoluted and contradictory, the pagan material on Canterbury MS 1 is a key window into the intentions, and the methodology of the Roll-maker. This and the previous chapter have introduced a discussion of the origins

of people myths on the Roll, revealing the importance of these myths in medieval England and showing how they were constructed by contemporary scholars.

Chapter Four

Space and Geography on the Roll

Introduction

The preceding chapters of this thesis have each explored particular segments of the Roll, analysing the interesting and significant features of the classical, biblical, and pagan material. Taking a slightly different approach, this chapter examines the Roll-maker's use and discussion of geography throughout the Roll. Firstly, an historiographical survey of the medieval concept of geography will provide a summary of how debates on this topic have developed. An analysis of what geography on the Roll can tell us about the Roll-maker's conception of the world will then establish that his geographical awareness is typical of a contemporary scholar. Following this, a discussion of the relationship between history and geography will take place, both more generally and with specific regard to the Roll. This will show that Canterbury MS 1 could not function as a national history *without* geography. Finally, this chapter will engage in a case study of CRC066, the only overtly geographic commentary on the Roll. This will unearth a previously unknown source, and will identify transcription and translation errors in the modern edition which have ramifications for our understanding of the commentary. Ultimately, this will further show that the Roll-maker had access to a more varied and obscure corpus of primary sources than has been assumed since Wall published his first edition of the Roll in 1919. This study of the Roll-maker's use of geography is the first geographic study of a genealogical roll, and, as such, offers a fresh approach to this genre.

Scholarship on geography in the Middle Ages is varied and interdisciplinary by nature. It is firstly important to emphasise the distinction between those who study the geography *of* the Middle Ages and geography *in* the Middle Ages. This distinction is laid out by Keith Lilley, who states that the former group engage with issues of territorial geographies of the Middle Ages, and the latter group aims to "understand the study of the subject itself and is more historiographical in orientation."²⁵⁴ This chapter follows the latter line of thought, examining the approach to geography on Canterbury MS 1 to discern the extent of the Roll-maker's spatial awareness. Studies of this nature emerged early in the twentieth century, before declining following the Second World War. Major pre-war works by

²⁵⁴ Keith Lilley, "Geography's medieval history: A neglected enterprise?", *Dialogues in Human Geography* vol. 1, no. 2 (2011), p. 149.

Raymond Beazley,²⁵⁵ John Kirtland Wright,²⁵⁶ and George Kimble,²⁵⁷ were pivotal in establishing the groundwork for studies on medieval geographic knowledge, yet subsequent works on historical geography have tended to focus more on the geography *of* the Middle Ages.²⁵⁸ The focus of this chapter fits with the approach established by Beazley, Wright, and Kimble, using Canterbury MS 1 to understand the geographic knowledge of the Roll-maker.

The medieval concept of geography

There has been much scholarly discourse on whether the concept of geography was a recognised separate discipline in the medieval world. Lilley provides a comprehensive survey of the debates. He summarizes that the initial arguments by the likes of Kimble and Wright, who argued that geography was not known as a distinct subject, have given way to revisionist approaches which argue that medieval scholars understood and acknowledged geography as a concept.²⁵⁹ This section discusses these historiographical debates, and will show that the use of geography on Canterbury MS 1 supports the revisionist arguments. This can be seen in the obvious attempts by the Roll-maker to integrate at least some geography into the narrative on the Roll. The initial arguments on this topic will first be introduced, produced by Kimble and Wright, before showing the more recent revisionist takes on medieval geography. From here, it will be shown where the Roll fits into this debate. Due to its historiographical nature, the analysis in this section will function mainly as a base for the rest of the chapter, allowing for greater exploration of how geography is treated on the Roll.

The existence of a concept of geography in the Middle Ages was largely ignored by Beazley and Kimble, who instead focused on geographical knowledge during the period. Wright argued that the term “geography” was rarely employed in the Middle Ages, although he cited an instance of Adam of Bremen using the word “geography” in his eleventh-century chronicle.²⁶⁰ He contended that any geographical knowledge learned in the Middle Ages was picked up incidentally by studying other subjects, and was “never thought [...] sufficiently dignified to enjoy a place by itself in the curriculum.”²⁶¹ Geography was instead allegedly

²⁵⁵ Raymond Beazley, *The Dawn of Modern Geography* vols. 1-3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897-1906).

²⁵⁶ John Kirtland Wright, *The Geographical Lore of the Time of the Crusades* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1965).

²⁵⁷ George H.T. Kimble, *Geography in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuesen & Co. Ltd, 1938).

²⁵⁸ Lilley, “Geography’s Medieval History”, pp. 149-155.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 155-157.

²⁶⁰ Wright, *Geographical Lore*, p. 127 & n. 1.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

encompassed by other subjects such as geometry and astrology.²⁶² Wright followed this by stating that the question of whether there was a medieval concept of geography is unimportant, as the way the medieval mind viewed geography had no effect on the “geographic lore” of the time.²⁶³ This is a view obviously shared by Beazley and Kimble who believed the topic so unimportant that they did not even broach it. The belief that geography had no medieval roots may be related to the previously held idea that it emerged as a distinct field only following Columbus’s “discovery” of the Americas in the early modern period.²⁶⁴ This dogma likely stems from the colonial hubris contemporary with Beazley, Wright, and Kimble, which asserted that European colonial exploration resulted in a greater understanding of geographical knowledge in the West. There was, therefore, no concept of geography prior to European colonial expansion according to this approach. These ideas on the medieval concept of geography have, however, been replaced in more recent years with revisionist takes, which argue the contrary.

Lilley contended that revisionist arguments reveal that medieval geography was a “definable entity” associated with cosmography and cartography and that it is observable in the primary sources, allowing for its characterisation as “medieval geography.”²⁶⁵ Natalia Lovosky follows this line of argument, asserting that geography as a discipline in the Middle Ages developed and grew throughout the thousand years this period spanned.²⁶⁶ One of the key points of this argument is the identification of an observable genealogy of geographic knowledge, stemming from Antiquity. Rather than a medieval stagnation of geographical progress until the rediscovery of Ptolemy in the Renaissance, as has been traditionally asserted,²⁶⁷ medieval geographical developments were influenced by those of Antiquity. Progress made in the field during the Middle Ages influenced debates and advances into the

²⁶² Ibid., pp. 127-129.

²⁶³ Ibid., p. 129.

²⁶⁴ For an evaluation see: Lilley, “Geography’s Medieval History”, pp. 147-149.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 156.

²⁶⁶ Natalia Lovosky, “Geography and Ethnography in Medieval Europe: Classical Traditions and Contemporary Concerns”, *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talbert (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2010), p. 312.

²⁶⁷ For an example of this traditional position: Norman J. W. Thrower, *Maps and Civilisation: Cartography in Culture and Society, third edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 58-59. Lilley addresses and counters this argument in: Keith Lilley, “Introduction”, *Mapping Medieval Geographies: Geographical Encounters in the Latin West and Beyond, 300-1600*, ed. Keith Lilley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 5; see also: Margaret Small, “Displacing Ptolemy?”, *Mapping Medieval Geographies: Geographical Encounters in the Latin West and Beyond, 300-1600*, ed. Keith Lilley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 152-172.

Renaissance.²⁶⁸ One of the key outcomes of the revisionist argument is that it gives credit to medieval geographers and reinforces their role in the development of geographical discourse. The way in which geography is discussed on Canterbury MS 1 tends to reinforce this revisionist argument.

Interest in geography in the Middle Ages is reflected in contemporary sources. Chroniclers such as Higden, Henry of Huntingdon, and even Geoffrey of Monmouth display an interest in geography. The whole of the first book of the *Polychronicon* deals exclusively with geography and the creation of the (known) world. This volume describes the regions of Africa, Asia, and Europe in detail, showing that Higden was interested in geography and thought it worth including in his history.²⁶⁹ Henry of Huntingdon was also interested in geography. He mainly focused on the layout of England, listing all the cities and their counties at the time the Romans ruled Britain, before describing the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms which succeeded them and the contemporary cities of England.²⁷⁰ Geoffrey of Monmouth, too, gives a brief description of England.²⁷¹ However, his interest also lay in the etymology of place names, usually describing how a place was named after someone. For example: “Aviragus, thinking that the Emperor was escaping with Hamo, hastened in pursuit [...] until he caught up with him near the shore that is now called Hampton after Hamo himself.”²⁷² The Roll reflects this etymological aspect of Geoffrey’s interest in geography. It is clear, therefore, that extant chronicles contemporary to the Roll-maker possessed wide ranging geographic information, particularly the *Polychronicon*. However, the Roll-maker did not employ any of these for the most geographic commentaries on the Roll, CRC001 and CRC066.

Information about the geography of both England and the known world is scattered throughout Canterbury MS 1. CRC066, despite some of its problematic details (discussed below), demonstrates an awareness of at least some developments in geography since Antiquity. A specific example of this can be seen where the Roll-maker refers to Jerusalem as the centre of the world, an idea which, although it existed previously, was popularised and

²⁶⁸ This idea is discussed by Margriet Hoogvleit, “The Medieval Texts of the 1486 Ptolemy Edition by Johann Reger of Ulm”, *Imago Mundi* vol. 54 (2002), pp. 8-9.

²⁶⁹ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 1.

²⁷⁰ Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, pp. 11-25.

²⁷¹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, p. 43.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 93.

made widespread following the crusades.²⁷³ Furthermore, it is evident that the Roll-maker thought clearly about geography and the information which he wanted to convey. This is seen in the selection of the source he used. Although the exact source cannot be confirmed, it is likely that it was associated with the obscure thirteenth-century chronicle of *Sancti Benedicti de Hulmo*, of which only one copy survives (discussed below). That the Roll-maker chose to bypass the more popular contemporary chronicles of the day, such as the *Polychronicon* and William of Malmesbury, all of which we know he used for other information, shows that he was concerned with representing the information he believed was correct. That these volumes were not used for geography suggests that the Roll-maker possessed a clear vision of the geographic information he wanted to convey, showing that geography was not something he thought uncritically about. The care he took in writing the only specifically geographic passage on the Roll lends itself to the revisionist idea that geography as a concept existed in some form during the Middle Ages.

The other point which must be considered when applying this debate to the Roll is that geography did not necessarily serve the same function that it does today. Instead, it is helpful to examine the Roll in the context in which it was written. This idea is echoed by James Ryan, who argues for the importance of moving beyond our present day epistemological and intellectual frameworks concerning the purpose of geography.²⁷⁴ Given-Wilson suggests that geography was used by chroniclers as a “gateway to other topics such as ethnography...”, a technique that the Roll-maker employed repeatedly.²⁷⁵ This is seen most overtly in CRC001, which specifically names the forty-one countries that the descendants of Noah’s sons went on to inhabit. Other commentaries on the Roll also demonstrate this technique. CRC002, for example, describes how the descendants of Strephus (CRN007) went on to inhabit the “northern parts of the world”, and CRC063 tells of the ethnic origins of some of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.²⁷⁶ This shows how the Roll-maker further engaged with the concept of geography through a contemporary framework, once again suggesting that he considered the idea of geography whilst constructing the Roll.

²⁷³ David Woodward, “Reality, Symbolism, Time, and Space in Medieval World Maps”, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* vol. 75, no. 4 (1985), p. 517.

²⁷⁴ James Ryan, “History and Philosophy: Discipline and Discourse, 2001-2002”, *Progress in Human Geography* vol. 28, no. 2 (2004), p. 235.

²⁷⁵ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 127.

²⁷⁶ See also: CRC002, CRC003, CRC009, CRC030, CRC063, CRC066 etc.

The historiographical debates surrounding whether there was a medieval concept of geography have been extensive. This section has given a very brief summary of the wider arguments, showing how the debates have developed from the idea that there was no concept of geography in the Middle Ages, to revisionist takes which argue that medieval geography was a recognised concept, and that it is important to place medieval works in their temporal and cultural contexts. By understanding these debates, Canterbury MS 1's place in medieval geography is better understood. The Roll-maker's selectivity of his source for the only overtly geographic commentary demonstrates this. He intentionally chose a source which reflected the information that he wanted to convey instead of using a more common source. The Roll-maker's emphasis on ethnography also reflects contemporary notions of geography, showing that Canterbury MS 1 subscribed to at least some form of a concept of geography.

The world according to Canterbury MS 1

Canterbury MS 1 is meant to be an historical document which displays the prestigious ancestry of the Lancastrian, and later the Yorkist, kings of England. However, by looking at certain commentaries, particularly CRC001 and CRC066, it is possible to discern the Roll-maker's conception of the physical world in which he lived. Throughout Canterbury MS 1, he alludes to many places in different contexts. This section will describe and assess how these places are discussed, establishing whether the Roll-maker possessed his own conception of the world around him, rather than simply subscribing to popular chronicles' perceptions of geography. By undertaking this study, more will be understood about how contemporary English scholars conceived of the physical world in which they lived. It is possible to see the Roll-maker's sense of space in other commentaries through his description of the layout of the world, as well as the continental division he describes in CRC001. This commentary will be a primary focus of this section, as it is in this text that the Roll-maker reveals the most clues as to how he viewed his world.

The Roll-maker demonstrates an awareness of ethnicity throughout the Roll. This can be seen in numerous commentaries where he lists the peoples who inhabit both England and other lands. An example of this is the latter half of CRC066, which states that other "nations" live amongst the English people, such as the Danes and Norwegians. This emphasis on ethnicity is also prominent on and around the German line, where the Roll-maker takes care to list the individual peoples descended from this line; including the Saxons, Angles, Jutes,

Goths, Vandals etc. (CRC015). This is a theme which runs throughout the Roll, demonstrating that the Roll-maker possessed a comprehensive awareness of at least European, particularly northern-European, ethnicity. This not only shows that the Roll-maker had a vague understanding of the demographics which made up England, but also an awareness of the geographic divisions between nations and different ethnicities.

CRC001 lists the forty-one countries that the descendants of Noah's sons went on to inhabit. This list of countries reveals major clues as to how the Roll-maker saw his world. The first point of note is the acknowledgement of the division of the world into three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe. This "three continents" idea was inherited from Antiquity and embraced by early medieval Christian scholars, most notably Isidore, who discussed a threefold division of the world.²⁷⁷ The Roll follows along with this traditional contemporary belief which became the standard, and shows that the Roll-maker, despite controversial contemporary views to the contrary in circulation, did not believe in the existence of the Antipodes.²⁷⁸ What is more interesting is some of the choices made, either by the Roll-maker or his source, regarding where certain countries are located. For example, Egypt and Libya are listed in Asia. This is not totally outlandish, as the *Polychronicon* puts Egypt in Asia, yet it is a notable departure from our modern-day continental division.²⁷⁹ Furthermore, some of the places mentioned do not appear to have any modern-day equivalent. These include: Ataxa in Asia, and Lessentium, Jetall, and Sirrdos Major and Minor in Africa. Despite consulting various primary sources, I have not been able to find any equivalent locations.²⁸⁰ The ambiguity of these place names indicates that the Roll-maker has either misread his own primary source, or, more likely, they are only mentioned in an obscure source which is now lost. Unfortunately, the exact primary source the Roll-maker used for this part remains a mystery, yet it is still possible to gain insights into how he saw the world through this commentary.

The Latin transcription of CRC001 shows the Roll-maker engaging with the concept of the shape of the Earth. The word "*orbis*" appears only once in the Latin of Canterbury MS

²⁷⁷ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, p. 285.

²⁷⁸ For more on the controversy surrounding the existence on the Antipodes, see: Rudolf Simek, *Heaven and Earth in the Middle Ages*, trans. Angela Hall (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1996), pp. 48-55.

²⁷⁹ Higden, *Polychronicon* vol. 2, pp. 130-134, 143-145.

²⁸⁰ Higden, *Polychronicon*; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*; Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*; Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum historiale*, ed. Benedictines of Saint-Vaast d'Arras, *Bibliotheca mundi, seu venerabilis viri Vincentii Burgundi ex ordine Praedicatorum, episcopi Bellovacensis, Speculum quadruplex, naturale, doctrinale, morale, historiale* (Douai: B. Belleri, 1624).

1's commentary. The Latin passage reads: *qui disseminati totum orbem post diluvium interse dividerunt*. This was translated in 2017 as: "divided the whole world among themselves after the Flood." "World" is a logical translation of *orbis*, but it does deserve further comment, considering this is the only instance in which the Roll-maker uses this term. Of the five instances where "world" appears in the English translation, "*mundus*" is the original Latin term used by the Roll-maker on three occasions (CRC021, CRC049, and CRC066). The only other instance is in CRC106 where "*saeculum*" has been translated as "the world." However, the context in CRC106 is slightly different, as the Roll-maker is not referring to the physical Earth, rather, the world is regarded in more of a metaphysical way. Nevertheless, this is worth pointing out, not only because we run the risk of becoming lost in translation, but because this shows that *mundus* is indeed the default term used by the Roll-maker when he is referring to the "world." The distinction between *mundus* and *orbis* is that *orbis* alludes specifically to a physical shape (circle or ring), whereas *mundus* refers to the world or the universe as concepts.²⁸¹ This is how contemporaries would have understood these terms. That the Roll-maker specifically used *orbis* rather than *mundus* in CRC001 shows that he was intentionally engaging with the earth's shape, being circular. Although this was the standard view of the shape of the world in the Middle Ages, it is worth mentioning because it confirms that the Roll-maker conformed to common contemporary beliefs.²⁸²

This section has demonstrated that the Roll-maker's understanding of geography largely follows that which was common to his contemporaries. The Roll-maker's level of understanding of geography also extends to his vast awareness of European ethnicity, something he refers back to consistently. This analysis of the Roll-maker's understanding of the physical world on Canterbury MS 1 has shown that he possessed geographical knowledge of at least the basics that one would expect from a medieval scholar. It has also shown that ethnicity was an idea which was clearly important to national histories during this period, suggesting that geographical divisions between nations was important to writing history.

²⁸¹ See entries for "*mundus*" and "*orbis*" in: Leo F. Stelten, *Dictionary of Ecclesiastical Latin* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1995), p. 166, 181.

²⁸² Contemporary agreement on the spherical shape of the Earth is briefly discussed in the introduction of: Simek, *Heaven and Earth*, pp. 1-2.

The relationship between history and geography on Canterbury MS 1

History and geography are two separate ideas which converge in the retelling of the past. Fundamentally, Canterbury MS 1 is an historical document meant to show the origins of the English people and the lineage of the kings of England. As an “origins of people” document, geography is a key element of the Roll, meaning that the Roll-maker had to engage with geographical knowledge to properly present his narrative. This section will demonstrate that geography is fundamental to origins of people myths, making it a necessary feature of genealogical rolls. Furthermore, it will be shown how history and geography were constantly intertwined during the Middle Ages, something which is overt on medieval *mappa mundi*. This medieval intertwining of history and geography is especially true of national histories; by focusing on the history of a particular place, in this case Britain/England, the Roll as a national history has its foundations in geography. Finally, it will be shown that geography can be seen on the Roll through the focus on the etymology of place names, a technique used to emphasise English ownership over previously British land. Once these points have been considered, it will be demonstrated that geography and history are symbiotic elements which are fundamental in forming history on Canterbury MS 1.

Although the medieval concept of geography has already been thoroughly explored, there is still room to discuss the role of medieval *mappa mundi* as one of the key ways in which history and geography were intertwined throughout the Middle Ages. *Mappa mundi* is a general label which refers to a medieval map, whether it be of the world or a region, or even a simple list of places.²⁸³ Traditionally though, *mappa mundi* presented the history of the human race within the parameters of a geographic map, integrating contemporary classical and biblical history.²⁸⁴ The thirteenth-century Hereford world map is the largest known surviving example of a *mappa mundi*, believed to have hung on a wall for educational purposes.²⁸⁵ Evelyn Edson notes that the majority of *mappa mundi*, though not copied from one another, represented a similar structure, indicating general contemporary agreement on the form of the world.²⁸⁶ Early generations of scholars of cartography and historical geography thought of *mappa mundi* as inaccurate and unhelpful, and as an example of why

²⁸³ An example of the latter: Evelyn Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers viewed their World* (London: The British Library, 1997), p. 132.

²⁸⁴ Evelyn Edson, *The World Map, 1300-1492: The Persistence of Tradition and Transformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), pp. 14-15.

²⁸⁵ For more on the Hereford world map see: P. D. A. Harvey, *Mappa Mundi: The Hereford World Map* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Edson, *Mapping time and Space*, p. 134.

²⁸⁶ Edson, *Mapping time and Space*, p. 134.

medieval geography is not worth examining.²⁸⁷ This perspective failed to view these maps outside of a present-day epistemological framework that reflects the accuracy and instructional purposes of modern maps. Geographical accuracy was not a hallmark of medieval maps, rather, *mappa mundi* served an educational purpose, designed to teach the reader about history and philosophy through a pictorial medium, something which was especially practical in a society with high illiteracy.²⁸⁸ Medieval *mappa mundi* were one of the major ways in which history and geography were intertwined during the Middle Ages; however, it is not the only interaction between the two fields.

The other way history and geography interacted in the Middle Ages was through extensive production of national histories. Before going any further, it is pertinent to give a brief explanation of how the term “nation” is used when referring to the Middle Ages, as it is a potentially difficult term when applied to this period. Norbert Kersken sums up this difficulty, stating that nation could be used in reference to political communities (kingdoms, ruling dynasty), a certain people or ethnic identity, or a physical geographic community with borders.²⁸⁹ Modern scholarship recognises this contemporary awareness of a concept of nation within these wide parameters. Robin Frame cites fourteenth-century English propaganda, which stated that Philip VI of France threatened the English language and land, as a way this national identity manifested.²⁹⁰ With this in mind, chroniclers engaged with the idea of the nation in various ways; most relevant to this study is through the writing of chronicles which focused on the history of a certain place or people.²⁹¹ English historians, such as Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury, are prime examples of two chroniclers who engaged with the nation in different ways. William wrote about the history of England from a Norman perspective, and saw the Anglo-Saxons and Britons as foreign peoples; Henry of Huntingdon presented an English history in which those in England were constantly under threat from foreign invasion (Romans, Vikings etc.).²⁹² When the present

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Norbert Kersken, “National Chronicles and National Consciousness”, *Chronicon: Medieval Narrative Sources, A Chronological Guide with Introductory Essays*, ed. Janos M. Bak and Ivan Jurkovic (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), p. 124.

²⁹⁰ Robin Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles 1100-1400* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 179. See also, Susan Reynolds, “The idea of the Nation as political community”, *Power and the Nation in European History*, ed. Len Scales and Oliver Zimmer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 54-66.

²⁹¹ This is also discussed in: Thorlac Turville-Petre, *England and the Nation: language, literature, and national identity, 1290-1340* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 2-3.

²⁹² Norbert Kersken, “High and Late Medieval National Historiography”, *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deborah Mauskopf Deliyannis (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 183-185.

study refers to the nation or a national history, it does so within these guidelines and with the knowledge of how the term was understood by contemporaries.

Examples of English cases of national histories include Bede, Nennius, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Geoffrey of Monmouth. Often these histories begin with a physical description of the land that is the setting for their history. Geoffrey of Monmouth, for example, opens with a description of Britain evocative of a Garden of Eden type scene.²⁹³ These descriptions were intended to inspire national pride in the reader, giving one the sense that they live in a sort of paradise. National histories require a conception of the nation; for one to exist, there must be an understanding of the commonality of the subject people. This is how geography affects history. Similar to origin myths, as shall be demonstrated, national histories are rooted in geography, as they concentrate on a certain *place*. This idea can be further seen in medieval *origines gentium*.

Origines gentium myths were popular in western Christendom during the Middle Ages, with different peoples promoting their own origin myths. These myths are fundamentally geographic. This is because origin myths existed to explain the common history of a people, a concept which Kersken identified as an aspect of nationhood.²⁹⁴ One of the major functions of the Roll is to show the origins of the English people. This is done on Canterbury MS 1 by representing progenitors such as Noah and Brutus as ancestors of the contemporary kings of England. Not only this, but the origins of other peoples are also mentioned in certain commentaries. This is seen in CRC001 which lists the forty-one “countries” (*patrie*) in Europe, Africa, and Asia which the descendants of Noah’s three sons went on to inhabit. Further examples of this can be seen in CRC002, which describes the origins of the northern European peoples such as the Danes and Norwegians, and CRC030, which describes a popular origin myth of the Scots. On Canterbury MS 1, we see these origin myths in relation to places. The concept of people and place are separate, but in origin myths they are brought together, making *origines gentium* a concept rooted in place and geography; Canterbury MS 1, which presents the history of the British/English, is geographically focused on Britain/England. The relationship between geography and history in *origines gentium*, and subsequently the Roll, is a key example of how history and geography interact with one another not just on Canterbury MS 1, but in wider medieval historiography. This relationship between history and geography is not something which has always been recognised by

²⁹³ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings*, p. 43.

²⁹⁴ See also: Reynolds, “Medieval ‘*Origines Gentium*’”, pp. 375-390. Kersken, “National Chronicles”, p. 124.

historians, but the above examples show how the two fundamentally interacted in the Middle Ages.

Another way Canterbury MS 1 shows an interest in geography is through the etymology of place names. This is something which Geoffrey of Monmouth is particularly known for, and due to its heavy use of the *HRB*, has come through in the Roll. Given-Wilson identified this as a common way geography and history interacted in the Middle Ages. He argues that the accuracy of the explanations given by Geoffrey as to how a certain place got its name are irrelevant; instead, they showcase the desire to connect the English present with the British past. By naming the land over which they now ruled, the English had the ability to claim they not only occupied the land, but that they also “civilised it.”²⁹⁵ This idea of etymology comes through on the Roll; seven commentaries on the pre-English part of it discuss the etymology of a place or people associated with England. In establishing English authority over British places through etymology, the Roll-maker adopts Geoffrey’s methodology. That he chose to do this indicates that he too wanted to convey a relationship with the British past, reinforcing English legitimacy to the rule of the land in which they dwelt.

Although primarily an historical document, the interactions between history and geography can be viewed throughout the Roll. As has been demonstrated, a relationship between geography and history already existed through *mappa mundi* and national histories such as chronicles in the Middle Ages. The nature of the Roll as not only a national history of the English, but also an *origines gentium* of the English people shows that geography is fundamentally a part of Canterbury MS 1. The use of etymology represents a further link between history and geography, as the Roll-maker used it as a vehicle to assert English dominion over formally British lands. This all demonstrates that without geography, the Roll would not operate as a history of the English/British specifically. Geography is fundamental to the narrative on Canterbury MS 1; the Roll would not be able to exist in the format it does without it.

²⁹⁵ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 129.

CRC066: A Case Study

CRC066, which describes the layout of the world, is the most overtly geographic commentary on Canterbury MS 1, providing the reader with a contextual basis for understanding Britain's place in the world. This commentary blends geographical information and a description of the peoples which inhabit the isle of Britain, delving into the Germanic origins of the English people. It is, however, the first half of this commentary which will be the primary focus of this analysis. The geographic information conveyed is central to understanding the Roll-maker's conception of geography. The nature of the geography he discussed is rather unique; he described the world as split into seven "climes" and went on to name the peoples who inhabit each one. I will argue that the way in which the Roll-maker presents the world is novel, leading into a discussion about the source which provided the material for this commentary. This commentary can be linked to an obscure manuscript housed at Hickling Priory in Norfolk at the time of the Roll's construction. This reveals further insights into the Roll-maker's methodology, showing that he had access to sources which were not considered prior to this thesis.

CRC066, in the 2017 translation, begins by stating that England is situated outside the "seven solid zones of the world." The Latin uses the word "*clima*." Zone is a fair translation, but this study will read this as "clime" instead. This is because this suggests that the Roll (or the source it employed) subscribed to the popular theory of the seven climatic regions of the world, a theory which was influential in both the East and West during the Middle Ages.²⁹⁶ This theory is notably found in the classical astronomer Claudius Ptolemy's (c. 100-170 AD) mathematical and scientific treatise, *Almagest*, which was recovered in the West by the twelfth century.²⁹⁷ Ptolemy's work, however, was most influential in the East where Islamic geographers and mathematicians built on Hellenistic geographical scholarship.²⁹⁸ That Canterbury MS 1 employed Ptolemy's seven climes approach is curious, as this was uncommon in the West at this time; rather, Western medieval geographers were more familiar with a world divided into five climactic zones, at least until the later Middle Ages.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ Edson, *Mapping Time and Space*, p. 7, 164-165; Catherine Delano-Smith and Roger J. P. Kain, *English Maps: A History* (London: The British Library, 1999), pp. 40-41.

²⁹⁷ Delano-Smith and Kain, *English Maps*, p. 41.

²⁹⁸ For more on Ptolemy's influence in the East, see: Adam J. Silverstein, "The Medieval Islamic Worldview: Arabic Geography in its Historical Context", *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talber (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons Ltd, 2010), p. 274.

²⁹⁹ Edson, *Mapping Time*, pp. 6-7.

Nevertheless, Ptolemy did not invent the climatic theory; classical scholars prior to him such as Aristotle and Pliny posited the idea of a world divided into seven or five climes.³⁰⁰ Climatic theory was well established in the canon of Western and Eastern geographical discussions, but the source which the Roll-maker employed likely did not consult Ptolemy directly.

Unusually, the Roll-maker names the places located in each clime. Typically, climatic maps will term each zone by their climate i.e. “Frigid Zone.” The English translation (2017) states:

England [...] is situated outside the seven solid zones of the world which comprise the Earth’s habitable surface. Austrasia and India are [its] neighbouring [zones], and subsequently [those occupied by the] Ethiopians, then the Egyptians, and last [those of] the Jerusalemites. Thus then in the middle region are the Greeks, then the Romans, then the Franks. Britain is not a region, for it is an island and surrounded by sea (CRC066).

There is much to unpack in this; not only does the Roll-maker list eight instead of seven zones, but what is initially striking is the first zone (or clime) listed. Austrasia, as it appears in the English translation, has been translated from *Austrius* in the Latin. The two translators of Canterbury MS 1 thus far have posited different takes on what *Austrius* could be referring to. Wall read this as “Austria [?],” including a question mark to show that he was unsure himself.³⁰¹ The most recent translation by Elisabeth Rolston suggested this should be read as “Austrasia.” The differing suggestions from both translators underscores the uncertainty about what *Austrius* refers to. However, it is possible to discern what *Austrius* could be by examining it in the context of the list of places from this commentary.

Austrius is first on a list of places which, according to the Roll-maker, make up the seven climactic regions of the world; he then goes on to name the other regions. Upon examination, I have identified a south to north trend in the list of places in this commentary. Keeping in mind the obvious limitations of geographical knowledge during this period, *Austrius*, although ambiguous, is clearly referring to a southern region; the Latin etymology of *Austri* itself indicates somewhere southern. The intention of a northward trend is clear, going from Ethiopia [*Ethiopes*] to Egypt [*Egyptii*] to Greece [*Greci*] to Jerusalem [*Jerolomitani*]. Neither Wall nor Rolston’s reading of *Austrius* fits the south-north pattern set by the Roll-maker. As a central European country, Wall’s suggested translation, Austria,

³⁰⁰ Wright, *The Geographical Lore*, pp. 242-243.

³⁰¹ Wall, *Maude Roll*, p. 21.

does not fit the south to north trend; nor does Rolston's Austrasia, an early medieval Merovingian Frankish kingdom. Both translations of *Austrius* can therefore be ruled out. The key to understanding what the Roll-maker means by *Austrius* is to identify the source for this commentary.

The only source I have located which can be reconciled with CRC066 is an obscure late thirteenth-century manuscript which appears as an appendix to John of Oxnead's Latin Chronicle, *Chronica Johannis de Oxnedes*.³⁰² The appendix in question, known as the *Chronica Minor Sancti Benedicti de Hulmo*, survives in only one manuscript: British Library, Egerton 3142.³⁰³ The Egerton manuscript, written at the Benedictine Abbey of St. Benet Hulme, Norfolk, was moved to the nearby Hickling priory sometime after the beginning of the fourteenth century, where it remained and was continually edited until the early sixteenth century.³⁰⁴ This means that we can locate precisely where this obscure manuscript was housed at the time Canterbury MS 1 was constructed. However, the obscurity of this text, as well as its subject matter, means it is not likely to be the direct source for CRC066. This is despite part of the manuscript being almost word-for-word reconcilable with the first half of the commentary;³⁰⁵ the other half of the Roll's commentary, from "And although there are Saxons...", is not found in the manuscript, nor is there reference to any similar discussion. This indicates that Canterbury MS 1 and the Hickling MS likely share a common source, now lost. Although I have not identified this lost source, its existence once again shows that the Roll-maker's source base was larger and more eclectic than initially thought. Much can still be learned about some of the more confusing aspects of CRC066 now that this manuscript

³⁰² John of Oxnead, *Chronica Johannis de Oxnedes*, ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1859), p. 412.

³⁰³ Dan Embree, "Chronica Minor Sancti Benedicti de Hulmo", *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* vol.1, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), p. 369; Dan Embree, "John of Oxnead", *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* vol. 2, ed. Greame Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), p. 936.

Locating this source was a collaboration between myself and my primary supervisor Dr Chris Jones, who was able to identify the similarities between CRC066 and the passage in the chronicle.

³⁰⁴ Robin Flower, "Manuscripts from the Cumberland Collection", *The British Museum Quarterly* vol. 12, no. 3 (1938), p. 80.

³⁰⁵ Canterbury MS 1, CRC066: "*Anglia, que nunc est, nuper Britannia dicta, extra septem mundi solida climata que sunt in spatio superficie terre habitabilis sita est. Sunt itaque proximiores Austrius, Indius, sequuntur Ethiopes, deinde Egiptii, postea Jerosolomitani. Scilicet, in medio climate deinde Greci, postea Romani deinde Franci. Britonum non est clima, insula enim est et mari circumdata. Anglia profecto Anglis consiles [sic] suos educat habitatores...*". Compare with: Sancti Benedicti Hulmo: "*Dictur insuper Britannia Anglia, ut volunt quidam, ab angulo, quia in quodam mundi angulo sita esse dinoscitur. Est enim extra mundi septem solida climata quae sunt in spatio superficiei terrae habitabili. Sunt itaque proxiores austro Indei, consequuntur Maur Ethiopes, deinde Egyptii postea Hierosolimitani scilicet in medio climate, deinde Graeci, postea Romani, deinde Franci. Britannia autem non et clima, insula enim est mari circumdata. Anglia profecto ut praedictum est angelis consimiles suos educat habitatores.*"

has been uncovered, such as the origins behind *Austrius* and other oddities in the commentary.

The list of regions in the corresponding passage in the Hickling MS reveals that *Austrius* is, in essence, a medieval “typo” on the part of the Roll-maker or his scribe. The Hickling MS reads: “*austro Indei*,” which translates as “southern India.”³⁰⁶ This explains why the Roll-maker stated that the world is made up of seven climes before listing eight locations, including *Austrius* followed by *Indius*. *Austrius* is not a place, rather, it is a misreading of the source. Looking further down the list clears up another oddity in the commentary. CRC066 states that the land inhabited by the Greeks is the middle region of the world. Not only does Greece not fit in the middle of the list given by the Roll-maker, but it is extremely unusual for Greece to be situated in the centre of a medieval map. These maps traditionally placed Jerusalem at the centre of the known world, particularly following the crusades.³⁰⁷ The Hickling MS subscribes to this contemporary theory, noting that Jerusalem is in the middle clime, suggesting that this should also be the case on the Roll. In this case, the fault is not with the Roll-maker in misreading his source, rather, it is with the 2017 Latin transcription of the Roll. Wall did not make this mistake in his original edition.³⁰⁸ The 2017 transcription reads: “... *postea Jerosolomitani. Scilicet, in medio climate deinde Greci, postea Romani deinde Franci*.” However, this is inaccurate. What the transcription *should* say is: “...*postea Jerosolomitani scilicet in medio climate, deinde Greci, postea Romani, deinde Franci*.” By mixing up the punctuation, the transcription has confused the passage in question, putting Greece, rather than Jerusalem in the middle clime. This is a more accurate reading of the Roll which shows that the Roll-maker did in fact subscribe to the traditional belief that Jerusalem is in the centre of the known world.³⁰⁹

CRC066 is a key case study; it reveals how the Roll-maker viewed the world around him. By reconciling the text with the corresponding passage in the Hickling MS, it was found that *Austrius* is the result of an error by the Roll-maker. A modern transcription error was also discovered, which moved the centre of the world from Jerusalem to Greece. The discovery of the *Chronica* as a potential source of the Roll opens up new avenues for

³⁰⁶ *Chronica Minor Sancti Benedicti de Hulmo*, ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1859), p. 412.

³⁰⁷ Woodward, “Reality, Symbolism”, p. 517.

³⁰⁸ Wall, *Maude Roll*, pp. 19-20.

³⁰⁹ The errors identified in the present study will be addressed as part of the ongoing Canterbury Roll Project and added to the Canterbury Roll Updates page: <https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/canterburyroll/research/updates.shtml>.

research. Present thinking locates the Roll's construction at Oxford or an urban centre such as London, making it unlikely that its provenance is confined to Norfolk or wider East Anglia, despite the potential employment of the *Chronica*. Nevertheless, this idea should not be completely dismissed, and could be a focus of a wider study in the future. The present analysis of CRC066 has revealed that the Roll-maker's source base was larger and more obscure than previously thought, showing that he thought critically about his source selection rather than just using standard contemporary chronicles such as Higden, William of Malmesbury, and Geoffrey of Monmouth. This suggests that the Roll-maker possessed his own knowledge on geography, as he employed a completely separate source for the only geographic commentary on the Roll.

Conclusion

Canterbury MS 1 was primarily meant to be a work of history. This chapter's analysis has shown, however, that geography plays a significant role in the presentation of this history. Geography and history are two separate elements which often converge, something which was common in the medieval world. Modern revisionist arguments on the medieval concept of geography have shown this, arguing that contemporary scholars were aware of this concept in some form. The use of geography on the Roll further supports this point, showing that the Roll-maker took care to convey specific geographic information. The geographic elements at play throughout the Roll reveal that the Roll-maker possessed the standard contemporary knowledge one would expect to find in an early fifteenth-century scholar. The relationship between history and geography on Canterbury MS 1 also demonstrated that geography is a significant feature of the Roll. Without it, this chapter contends, the Roll would be vastly different; it is fundamental to the concept of a national history. Finally, the case study of CRC066, the most fundamentally geographic commentary on the Roll, unearthed various previously unknown facets of the Roll. By identifying a south to north trend in the list of climatic regions, a new source was discovered, expanding the growing canon of sources used by the Roll-maker. As the first geographic study of a genealogical roll, this chapter has provided previously unknown insights into the methodology of the Roll-maker, as well as medieval geographical scholarship more generally.

Conclusion

It has now been over one hundred years since Canterbury MS 1 was first edited and translated by Arnold Wall. Since then, the Roll has been on a journey which has seen it disseminated and studied through multiple lenses, allowing modern scholars to glimpse at the environment in which it was produced. This thesis is the latest entry in an expanding canon of literature that offers a fresh approach to an underexplored part of the Roll. It has revealed that there is more than initially meets the eye in the early parts of Canterbury MS 1. Traditional scholarship has scarcely recognised the value of the early and obscure material from chronicles and rolls. The approach taken in this thesis has demonstrated that there is value in looking at this material. The study carried out here has revealed the Roll-maker's sources for some of the more obscure moments on the Roll, finding that he had access to a greater and more varied source base than was initially thought. It has also highlighted the extent to which the Roll-maker was selective in his use of sources. Building on the approaches taken by Shirota and Parker, this study has shown that this is true of the biblical and ancient history on the Roll.³¹⁰ This thesis represents a new way of looking at genealogical rolls; it has studied how history was constructed on the early and often neglected parts of rolls.

Examining the construction of history on the Roll through the themes of empire, origin of people myths, and geography, has revealed different aspects of the development of history writing in fifteenth-century England. Chapter one introduced a discussion of how classical Rome was viewed and portrayed in contemporary England, a perspective which, until now, has not been explored in the historiography. The classical segment of the Roll shed light on the Roll-maker's methodology, establishing that he employed the *HRB* for his representation of Britain and Rome's interaction during the historical period in which Britain was subservient to the Roman Empire. The *HRB*, as was demonstrated, presents a Britain-centric account of this period. Even so, the Roll-maker truncated Geoffrey of Monmouth's version to portray a semi-fraternal relationship between Britain and Rome. This idea is strengthened further with more subtle allusions to the Romans. Aeneas and Romulus and Remus's place on the genealogy, and the inclusion of the account of Belinus and Brennius's sack of Rome, are examples of this. This established early on the Roll that Britain was not entirely dominated by Rome, potentially due to England's contemporary alliances with the Empire. The parity between Britain and Rome that is suggested by the Roll-maker shows that

³¹⁰ Shirota, "Unrolling History"; Shirota, "Royal Depositions"; Parker, "A Woman's Role."

he employed his own creative licence in his reading of this primary source, the *HRB*, strengthening the evidence that he was not simply a careless complier.

Chapter two introduced the first of two assessments of origin of people myths on the Roll by examining the biblical material. Typically, biblical material on chronicles and rolls have tended to be skipped over by historians to focus on where the national narrative begins. This chapter has laid the groundwork for future studies on this area in medieval historiography. It demonstrated that, although it may appear uninteresting, the biblical material of the Roll is a melting pot of apocryphal biblical exegesis and scriptural canon. A wide primary source base was employed by the Roll-maker, using texts other than the contemporary Vulgate Bible, such as the *Historia Scholastica*. This shows that the Bible was not necessarily the authority on all biblical matters in fifteenth-century England. Adopting Shirota's methodology, understanding political events contemporary to the Roll is key to discerning how the biblical material was constructed. The minority of Henry VI meant that a strong and prestigious lineage was needed to reinforce Henry's claim to the throne. This showed why Noah, whom God deemed the only man worth saving, was chosen as the progenitor of the English kings for the Noah group. This chapter also provided a useful evaluation of how the role of Scaef developed throughout English medieval history. Scaef, originally invented to provide Northern Europeans with a claim to the biblical past, by the fifteenth century, had his name changed and was relegated to an inconsequential position on the German line, several generations below the spot under Noah that he once occupied in medieval mythology. This makes for an interesting case-study of how history/mythology developed throughout the Middle Ages, showing that contemporary English historians' conception of their past was constantly developing. This analysis furthered the idea that the Roll-maker had clear intentions for how he wanted to construct the biblical material, possessing an adequate awareness of the sources available to him.

A clear thought process and knowledge of his sources is also evident in the Roll-maker's handling of the pagan material. This segment is primarily used as a bridge between the biblical and Brutus origin myths, reinforcing continuity in the lineage of English kings. By employing Nennius, or an unknown source which used Nennius, the Roll-maker went deeper than the standard compilation chronicles of the time, showing that he had a clear idea of how he wanted to construct the genealogy. Chapter three also explored the question of whether Canterbury MS 1 is a product of the Middle Ages or the contemporary Renaissance, finding that the Roll's physical and textual representation of pagan figures suggests it is a

firmly medieval document. This is also the first study to consider euhemerism on a Noah roll; Canterbury MS 1 euhemerises pagan gods such as Woden, Jupiter, and Saturn, as was popularly done in the Middle Ages. This furthers the argument that the Roll is principally a medieval document; suggesting that English history writing was at this time distinctly medieval while other centres on the Continent were experiencing the Renaissance. Chapter three reinforced the claim that the Roll-maker put thought into constructing the early material on the Roll, and that he methodically used and manipulated his sources to portray continuity.

Chapter four, finally, used Canterbury MS 1 to show that a concept of geography existed in some form during the Middle Ages. A wider historiographical discussion was introduced to show that the Roll is evidence of the argument in favour of a distinct medieval conception of geography. The Roll-maker's selectivity in choosing his sources proves this. At the same time, the case study on CRC066 revealed that an obscure, previously unknown, source was employed. This is one of the key outcomes of this thesis, demonstrating further that the Roll-maker had access to a wider and more varied source base than initially thought. That the Roll-maker only employed this source for the lone inherently geographic commentary on the Roll suggests that he possessed knowledge of his sources. This is a theme which is consistent throughout all four chapters. The Roll-maker's intent to promote his narrative is overwhelmingly evident through his careful selection of sources for the Roll's early and obscure material.

This thesis has demonstrated that there is value in studying the early and obscure material, not just on genealogical rolls, but also in chronicle sources more generally. Overall, this study has revealed that fifteenth-century English historians' construction of the past was fluid, eclectic, based on contemporary events, yet also methodical. This thesis shows that this type of study can reveal insights into the Roll-maker's perceptions of history. Previous studies demonstrated how events contemporary with Canterbury MS 1 influenced how history was written on later parts of the Roll. My study has shown that this is also true for the Roll's representation of biblical and classical history. It has also been shown that the Roll-maker possessed an idea of the narrative he wanted to portray for not just the early material, but also other aspects such as geography. An unintended outcome of this thesis is that some aspects of Arnold Wall's original edition of the Roll have been proven correct, leading to reflection on some of his initial claims. There are two instances where Wall's interpretation has been vindicated: Wall's identification of Nennius as a source has been found to be accurate, despite doubts expressed by later scholars, and his initial transcription of CRC066

was determined to be correct, despite recent revisions suggesting otherwise. These insights are invaluable to medieval historiography and lay a platform for other focused studies of this nature.

There remain further avenues for future work on the Roll and rolls in general. In her MA thesis, Shirota advocated for religious and economic evaluations of Canterbury MS 1.³¹¹ These remain viable avenues of research and could provide further valuable insights into the construction of the Roll. Although my thesis has provided a robust study of the Roll's portrayal of ancient and biblical history, there are still numerous parts of the manuscript to which the same approach could be applied. In chapter two, the idea of two Roll-makers was briefly posited as a way of explaining inconsistencies between the genealogy and commentary. This is a new idea which could be further explored and would provide greater understanding to the methodology of medieval roll-makers. Regarding the Noah group as a whole, a major comparative study between the rolls in the group is yet to be undertaken. Such a study would involve looking at the genealogies and commentaries on each roll to find any textual or physical variation. A study of this nature would require a major collation of Noah rolls, a project which is already underway at Nottingham Trent University. A comparative exercise could shed light on the development of the Noah rolls and the methodology of the scribes themselves, something which would be invaluable to the overall area of roll studies. Furthermore, this thesis has demonstrated the value of a detailed and focused thematic analysis, in this case regarding empire, origins of people, and geography on the Roll. A similar focused thematic approach could be adopted, revealing other new insights into the construction of Canterbury MS 1 and other rolls. One potential avenue is the Roll-maker's apparent interest in Welsh genealogy. A focused study could reveal the origins of this interest as well some of the sources he used for this line, which at present remains a mystery. The same could be undertaken for the German line from Japheth.

Canterbury MS 1 is a confusing amalgamation of history and mythology, spanning thousands of years and including major historical and mythological figures such as Noah, Arthur, Alfred the Great, and William the Conqueror. This thesis has introduced several thematic approaches to a medieval genealogical roll. By undertaking these approaches, it has been shown that an exercise in the obscure is worth engaging in. The present study has demonstrated this, adding to the growing corpus of roll scholarship. This thesis is the first to

³¹¹ Shirota, "Unrolling History", p. 130.

analyse how biblical and ancient history were constructed on a medieval genealogical roll, and how geographical knowledge shaped its representation on a roll. By looking at the Roll-maker's sources and showing how he manipulated them to portray his desired narrative, this thesis has advanced our understanding of the ways in which history was constructed in the Middle Ages. The present study has widened our understanding of the Roll-maker's source base, shown that he selectively edited his sources based on his agenda, and highlighted the importance of origin myths on Noah rolls and in medieval England. Ultimately, the thematic approach has shown that there is value in studying the early material on rolls and chronicles. Employing this approach in future research may reveal further insights into how history was written in the Middle Ages.

The findings of this study are cause for reflection on what should be considered useful as an historical source. E. H. Carr argued that the task of the historian is necessarily selective. He famously demonstrated this through analogy: we know that Caesar crossed the Rubicon, but millions of people have crossed the Rubicon. Why, then, do we know specifically about Caesar's crossing, but not that by the millions of people who have crossed before and since?³¹² That Caesar crossed the Rubicon was deemed by historians to be interesting or important enough to be a fact of history.³¹³ Carr, here, was talking about how historians use and emphasise certain facts, though his analogy can be applied to how medieval materials have been viewed by modern historians of the late Middle Ages and Early Modern period. Although historians now appreciate the value of chronicles and rolls, they have tended to focus more on specific areas while ignoring others. The textual analysis of single pieces of commentary in this thesis has shown that value lies in even the smallest details. A reconsideration of what is determined of interest or useful is therefore necessary. Although Carr's analogy relates to how historians decide which facts are interesting, this selectivity extends to the way historians use their sources and the parts of them they choose to focus on. My study has illustrated that the voice and methodology of the chronicler/Roll-maker is just as evident in the early and seemingly less significant material. Perhaps historians have been too selective when assessing what is, and is not, interesting in their primary sources.

³¹² E. H. Carr, *What is History?* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 1986), pp. 5-6.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

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